

VARIOUS TRACTS.

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AND

Curate of the United Parishes of St. Ann and Agnes
and St. John Zachary, Aldersgate.

Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter. PERSIUS.



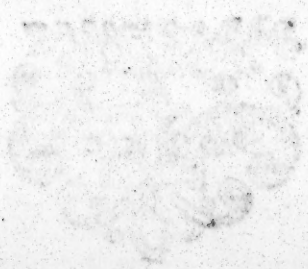
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T O T H E

S U B S C R I B E R S .

I H A V E endeavoured to render this Work useful and entertaining; I hope, therefore, it will merit your Esteem. I must bespeak your Candour in the Letters from the Dead: For as the Language, in which they were wrote, is a dead Language, but little known to the Living, Mistakes and Errors will undoubtedly occur in the Translation, and much of the Spirit of the Originals be lost. I hope you will excuse the not inserting, amongst other Tracts, *The Reasonableness of abolishing Christianity,*

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anity, till after the Return of the next Packet from Tartarus and Paradise ; that I may be certified from those Places, what I may lose or gain in the next, since I am not to gain but lose by the Publication of it in this World. You may, indeed, be surpris'd, that a Work so useful, so generally wanted, and so properly adapted to the Times, wherein Infidelity and Immorality are daily acquiring a Superiority over Virtue and Religion, should have met with any Discouragement. Upon the Arrival of the Packet, which is hourly expected, the Tract will be put to the Press, printed in the same Manner as the rest, and delivered free from any Expence,

By your most obliged

7 DE61

Christ-Hospital,
London.

humble Servant,

JAMES PENN.



[v]

THE
CONTENTS.

THE Fair Sex vindicated from Folly and Extravagance	Page 1.
Letters lately received from the Dead	33.
Remarks on the Authority which the Church of England claims in her Ar- ticles and Canons	165.
An Apology for the Conduct of the Supe- rior Clergy	191.
The Condition of an Author	217.

SIX DISCOURSES.

Causes assigned for the Continuance and Progress of Infidelity	235.
The Eleventh of Feb. 1757, the General Fast	253.
A 3	The

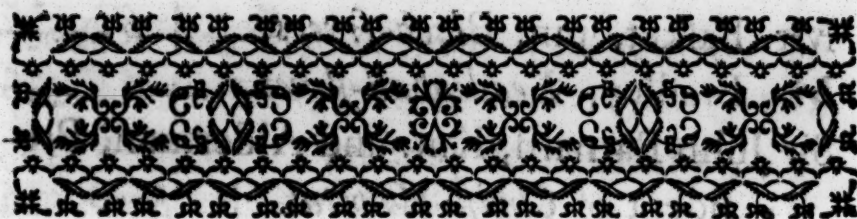
vi The CONTENTS.

The Third Sunday in Advent	Page 273.
The good and bad Effects of Plays	293.
A Method to prevent Theft and Robbery	307.
The Thirtieth of January	323.
A Sermon at Christ Church, Sept. 21, 1756	343.
Some Mistranslations, &c. of the Hebrew Text corrected	367.



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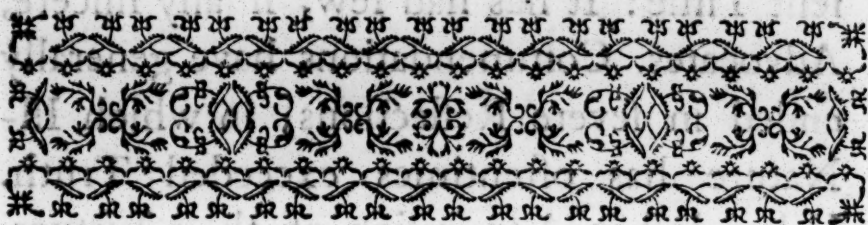
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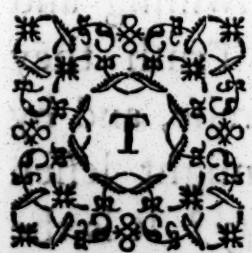
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THE
FAIR SEX VINDICATED
FROM
FOLLY and EXTRAVAGANCE.



O vindicate the Character of the innocent and undeserving, from Calumny and Reproach, has been ever esteemed the Mark of an ingenuous and benevolent Disposition. A fairer Prospect of acquiring that Title cannot be offered, than from the present Undertaking. It may be difficult to execute it with Success, because it is opposing vulgar Errors, in which a Man frequently risks the Credit of his Understanding, without any Advantage in Reversion. The Cause however is fair, though it has

B

been

been mal-treated from Adam to this present Time: It has had few, if any sincere, Advocates. Commendations have generally ended in severe Reflections; in which Ill-Nature has oftentimes exceeded Truth. When lost in Admiration of their Virtues, and unwilling to acknowledge a Superiority, we seek Relief from Scandal and Defamation.

It might have been expected that some Fair would have apologized for her Sex: That it has not been done, may have rather proceeded from Modesty, than Inability; who had rather suffer Reproach wrongfully, than reproach justly. Who then is to undertake it? Are not the Males unwilling and afraid, lest by speaking the Truth they should say too much in their Praise, and by giving them their Due they might lessen their own Weight and Authority? It is the common Practice of little Minds to rail and exclaim against superior Worth and Merit, with the fond Hopes of acquiring Reputation by it: And it has not always proved unsuccessful. This false and low Humour has been so much encouraged against the Fair, that a Custom once thought to have been peculiar to them, has by constant Use become our own.

To

from FOLLY and EXTRAVAGANCE. 3

To silence the present, and prevent future Clamours, and to procure them that Respect and Civility, which the Tenderneſs and Delicacy of their Sex, if not their Merit claim, I have undertaken their Defence. What is written, I hope, will be received with Temper and Candour, as I am entirely diſinterested; being rather prejudiced againſt them, if we are to form our Judgment of Things according to vulgar Notions*.

Before we vindicate the Daughters, it may not be impertinent to offer ſomething in Vindication of the Mother; who has been reviled and abuſed in all Ages, for what ſhould rather be an Object of Pity, than Reſentment; whoſe Miſfortune it was, not Fault, that ſhe was not created impeccable†. It may not be eaſy to bring the Mind to think well of thoſe, of whom we have entertained a light or mean Opinion; nor to look upon thoſe Opinions, which Time and Cuſtom have eſtabliſhed, to be wrong. Errors, when they favour our Vanity, or excuſe our Follies, meet with a too kind Reception, and are the longeſt retained; they are with difficulty removed,

* Being married.

† Eve, whoſe miſtake has ſerved for a conſtant Re-
proach of the Fair.

4 *The FAIR SEX vindicated*

when authorized by Antiquity, and supported by Learning.

Our original Parents have been frequently, but unjustly, blamed by their Offspring, for what they are equally blameable, the transgressing the Divine Commands. We are now as little governed and directed by Reason, as they once were; the Laws of God of as little Force and Obligation; and our Passions and Senses as strongly solicit and allure to unlawful Gratifications.

Some have been so weak, and so ignorant of themselves as to have imagined, that had they been placed in the same delightful Situation, they should have retained their Innocence, and not to indulge a vain, and which proved to be a fatal Curiosity, have sought for greater Knowledge, or coveted more pleasing Enjoyments: But can we now maintain our Innocence? Why should it then be thought, that we could have preserved it?

It is not the present Design to take Notice of the Reflections thrown out against the unhappy Pair; their Guilt needs no Aggravation. It was Affliction enough to them, that they had offended so gracious a Creator, and excluded themselves, and their yet pure and untainted Offspring, from the blissful

ful Enjoyment of an earthly Paradise. My Intention is to extenuate, not excuse the Crime of one, whom none of us, had we beheld, could have blamed; none of us but would, as Adam did, have sinned with her; or would not have died, rather than have lived without her. He was comfortless, before he had her; he was rather unfortunate, than unhappy in having her; and he would have been miserable, had he not continued with her. To whom should he communicate his Joys, if Joys he could have had any, when he had no Being like himself to converse with? What Misery inexpressible to have been deprived of Happiness, little as it is now prized, then scarce enjoyed? Without whom, Existence would not have been desirable. Adam confessed as much, by the Uneasiness he expressed, before he received her, and God allowed the Uneasiness to have been just, by bestowing upon him a Consort.

That Sex, who is on several Accounts the Source of all the Happiness we enjoy, is commonly, but ungenerously, complained of, as the Cause of all the Calamities we suffer: For allowing, that by the Woman's Mistake Sin was introduced into the World, by the same Mean the Guilt of it was can-

celled: And if Eve through the Weakness, rather than the Fault of Human Nature exposed us to everlasting Punishment, by the Seed of the Blessed Virgin everlasting Glory is offered to us.

Cease we then from Complaints against Eve, and no more upbraid the Daughters for the Parents Fault; who though they have too often the least, are deserving of the highest Respect. Men of Sense and Judgment know their Value and Merit; And none but those of little Understanding exclaim against them; to palliate and excuse their own Follies, they detract from their Worth.

There may be some of the Sex no great Honour and Ornament to it: But of those there are few, who are so through their own Fault. It may have been their Misfortune to have placed too great Confidence in our Sex: And the Wrongs and Injuries received from us have been, and too often are the Occasion of the Crimes and Follies committed by them. So that for one Adam betrayed by an Eve, many of her Daughters have, through artful and delusive Promises, lost their Virtue, their Innocence, and their Ease.

If

from FOLLY and EXTRAVAGANCE. 7

If it was rightly, it certainly was not kindly done in Adam; so soon to have left her. How much desired, how greatly longed for, before she came; and when received, how soon neglected. We might be surprised at such ungenerous Treatment, did not modern Examples shew; that fond and passionate Desires, when gratified, soon become cool and indifferent; and those, for whom we lately expressed the most tender and endearing Affections, are forsaken and deserted, or treated rather as Slaves of brutish Lust than Objects of chaste and pure Love. By leaving her alone she was more exposed to the Attacks of the Tempter, and more liable to be seduced by his artful Suggestions; who, it is probable for obvious Reasons, would not have accosted her in the Presence of her Husband: That she erred therefore, may have been owing to a Want of Affection in him.

Another Complaint against Eve is her unparalleled Baseness and Cruelty, in knowingly seducing Adam into a Commission of Sin, and thereby involving him and his Posterity in the Punishment of it. Her Love and Affection, if she had any, would surely have withheld her from so foul an Act—You have before seen, what Love and

Affection she owed to one, who seemed to have exposed her as a Prey to the Tempter. But what is urged as a Motive to have dissuaded her from it, her Love and Affection, was the real Cause of doing it: When having ate of the Fruit she found, that the Punishment was not immediately inflicted, as it had been threatened, so far from imagining that she had done wrong, she might have naturally entertained Hopes of receiving the promised good; and full of these hopes she hastens to her Husband, and perfectly innocent and free from any Design of doing him any Injury, (for she herself had suffered none) offers to him the Fruit; that if any good, as she expected, would follow, he might be equally partaker of it with her.

The sacred Historian sufficiently clears Eve from this Baseness, acquainting us that what she did, was before she was sensible of the Folly committed; which she did not discover, till after Adam, cherishing the same Expectations, had complied with her Request: *Then the Eyes of them both were opened, and they knew, that they were naked.* Nor could Adam justly reproach her, because he knew his Duty, and the Consequence of transgressing it had been plainly communicated to him; yet when God ex-
postulated

postulated with him, he endeavoured by an artful and mean Insinuation to excuse himself, by accusing his Wife as the Aggressor, and saying that what he had done was through Ignorance: *And he said, the Woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree and I did eat.* But he needed no Persuasives, to what of himself he was too well disposed; no Motives to induce him to the fatal Act, but what before had engaged his Consort, the pleasing and inviting prospect of becoming wiser, than he was.

Weak and unjust then was the Apology, unless it can be supposed, that she gave him of the Fruit, without acquainting him from what Tree it was taken: But this is Malice so great, Behaviour so ungenerous, that none but the Author of our Misery could be engaged in it. It was his own free and voluntary Act; he must otherwise have been an Object of Mercy, not Justice.

Though we cannot excuse, we may further extenuate the Guilt of Eve. The sacred History is silent as to any extraordinary or divine Communication of the Law to Eve, as had been given to Adam: Her Obligations therefore to Obedience were not so strong and powerful; from him, not from
God

God she learnt her Duty. This it was, that made the Attempt of Satan successful; this it was, that prevailed with her to credit the saying, *that though she ate of the Tree, she should not surely die*; for she might have imagined, that her Husband might have been mistaken as to the Consequence of Sin; which Belief or Persuasion, if real, must have powerfully urged her to the unhappy Deed: And the contrary Opinion cannot be collected from the Context. This seems to have been the Reason, why Satan addressed himself to Eve, rather than Adam; because he had received the Law immediately from God himself, and consequently was not so easy to have been imposed upon, or deceived by an artful Misrepresentation of it.

Having endeavoured to set forth the true Character of Eve in this important and interesting Affair, which through Prejudice, rather than Ignorance, has hitherto been concealed, I shall now undertake to vindicate her Daughters of the present Age from the Follies and Crimes, with which they have been with the same Injustice aspersed by those, who are better read in Effects, than understand, or may be willing to enquire into the Causes, that have produced them.

The

The first Complaint is, *that they are extravagant and indecent in their Dress; that they take up so much Time, to use the Language of the Apostle, in plaiting of the Hair, and putting on of Apparel, that they seem as if made for none other Purpose: And the Manner of adjusting their Trinkets is so negligent and unseemly, that Chastity is almost exploded, and Modesty has lost her native Charm, and knows not how to blush*—Granting all this to be true; can you expect that there should be Sarah's, when there are no Abraham's? Must not the Women dress so as to please their Husbands? What therefore they do, is in Obedience to their Commands, not to suit their own Taste: And they are fond of and admire the Fashions, because they too well perceive and know, that they are the best Recommendations to their Favour and Esteem. It is your Weakness, but their Prudence to conform to the reigning Manners of the Age: And I wish, that it was as reasonable; as it seems to be expedient; as conformable to the Rules of Decency and Modesty, as it is necessary for the Sex, thus to shew their Love and Affection for you.

You see then the Cause of these Follies, and if they really appear to be such, as Opportunities offer, you must condemn, not approve;

approve; must express a Dislike for, not discover any Pleasure in them. But if the Modes in Taste delight, you must not complain of the Expence in supporting them, nor upbraid them, if to be subservient to your Will they are frequently exposed, and sometimes fall into Temptations, that may prove dangerous to their Virtue and your Ease.

As this Reformation is not likely to begin, where it should, I shall make use of one Motive to induce the Fair to the good Work; That the Men encourage and indulge you in these Vanities, lest by studying the Improvement of the Mind, you should be found to exceed them as much in good Sense, as you now do (though oftentimes at the Expence of Religion and the Abuse of a fine Understanding,) in Dress and Complaisance.

The second Complaint is, *that they are excessively fond of the publick Diversions and Entertainments*—From whom is it that they receive Invitations to those Places? Who are their Companions and Associates? If it is out of Vanity or Pride to make an Appearance, who are they that sit as Spectators? Is not our own Sex as passionately fond of Amusements? Innocent if not indulged,

dulged, but criminal when our Circumstances will not permit us to partake of them, or they are such as will corrupt our Morals, or draw us off from attending upon the necessary Duties and Engagements in Life.

But if any bad Effects should follow from frequenting those Places, the Censure should not come from thence, where the Example is set. It is very common, though ridiculous and absurd, to throw out Reflections, when we are equally culpable with the Aggressors; to condemn those Follies in others, which if not openly, we may secretly practise. The best way to reform the Abuses complained of in others, is first to clear ourselves from Suspicions of Guilt. Abstinence would be badly recommended by a Glutton; Temperance, from a Drunkard; Chastity, from a Debauchee: And certainly Declamations against Pleasures will be idly and vainly employed by those, who gladly embrace every Opportunity of partaking of them. If then you would disengage their Affections, you must avoid being seen at those Places; the contrary Behaviour must rather excite, than allay Desire.

The third Complaint is, *that when they are not diverting themselves abroad, the Time is spent at Home, not in reading good and pious Books,*

Books, but Novels, Romances, and the Histories of Rakes and Prostitutes.—I wish that we did not first write them, and afterwards recommend the Perusal; which are read by many, rather to make themselves agreeable Company, than from an Approbation of such Writings; for the Fashion is so general, that a Person ignorant of them appears to great Disadvantage in Company, with no little Reflection upon his Taste.

The Prejudice they are of to our Morals, is much greater than commonly imagined. The Plainness and Simplicity of the Stile, the Wit and Humour interspersed, and the Story pleasantly related, are powerful Recommendations in their Favour. But their Words though smoother than Oil, are as Daggers in the Heart; like the Flatterers soft pernicious Tongue they strike the Passions, but hurt the Understanding; like Lightning they pierce us with the Arrows of Death, before we suspect any Danger; and we lose our Virtue, as Men lose their Lives by Assassins, without knowing from whence the Wound 'is given. They please our Imagination, but spoil us of our Virtue; they amuse indeed and entertain, but it is often at the Expence of Innocence in Reversion; they never made one Libertine honest,

honest, but have ensnared many an Innocent into Misery and Ruin. It would be of considerable Benefit to the Cause of Virtue and Piety, and the Destruction not of a true but false Taste, to have such Writings suppressed: It would be the Means of promoting real, not imaginary knowledge, and we should be read in that, which would make us both wiser and better.

The fourth Complaint is, *that they are not such fond Mothers, nor such good Housewives, as the Patriarchal Dames; who thought it no Disgrace to rear their own Offspring, and inspect into the Affairs of the Family.*—That the Pattern is not imitated, is true; there would be fewer Bankruptcies and less Misfortunes if it was. But who are to blame? Those who reproach. To preserve a fine Shape, and appear in publick Company to an Advantage, the Tenderneſs and Affection of the Parent are given up, and Nature is forced to submit to Fashion. This is done to oblige the fine Gentleman, who commands it, and who cannot bear the Noise of the squalling Brat, &c. The Texture of his Brain is so fine, and Stomach so delicate, as to be in Danger of receiving an Injury from it. Thus the Weakness of
the

the Woman is pretended to excuse the Fantasticalness and Effeminacy of the Man.

The fifth Complaint is, *that they are not, what in a most solemn Manner they have professed to be, obedient and submissive to their Husbands; the Scriptures also require, that they should so be in every Thing.*—Do not the same Scriptures require, that Husbands should honour them, speak kindly and tenderly, and love them as themselves? That Obedience is not paid, proceeds not from Contumacy. The Persons who demand it, are generally of a Tyrannical Disposition, and little deserving of it. Matrimony is a federal Rite, wherein two Parties mutually and voluntarily consent upon certain Conditions to take each other: And it is upon the Performance of those Conditions, that Obedience is claimed, and will undoubtedly be paid, when they are by the other Party performed. Where Love and Kindness are, there Esteem and Respect will be.

Though the Treatment which Socrates received from Xantippe, was not very becoming, yet she might have had Reasons for being angry. The Philosopher perhaps got the better of the Husband; his fondness of Letters might have lessened his Affection, and rendered him an unsociable

Crea-

Creature. Happy however would it be for the Sex to have a Socrates. This would be rather accounted a Blessing, than a Misfortune, compared with what they suffer from the Churl, the Sot, the Fop and the Fool; the miserable Portion of many a Fair. If to such any Obedience is paid, any Respect shewn, it is more than they merit, more than they can have any Pretension to, either from Reason or Scripture: It seems to be a Work of Supererogation.

I am not for depriving the Man of his natural Authority, but advising him not to exceed the Rules of Prudence and Moderation in the Exercise of it, and it will then have the proper Effect. But when Commands are the Result of a perverse and capricious Humour, and Obedience is made the Cloak for Slavery, it is no wonder, that galled with such cruel and ungenerous Treatment, they should not appear passive.

The sixth Complaint is *against their private Conversation, which abounds with Scandal and Censure.*—The Complaint is not without Foundation. I know not how it is, that a Practice so universally condemned as weak, ridiculous and absurd, should so universally prevail: But it is not confined to the Tea Table. Though the other Sex is

severely and unfairly treated on that Account, we are equally, if not more culpable. What are Coffee-Houses, but Places where the Men daily assemble to talk and hear Slander and Defamation? What are Clubs, but set Meetings for the same Purposes? The Censures of the Fair, which are generally confined to Things pertaining to Taste, Politeness and Dress, are not so dangerous and mischievous in their Consequences as those, which concern the Moral, Mercantile, or Political Conduct and Behaviour of Men. The Lady may be chagrined, and have the Vapours for a Time from such Indelicacies; but the Man loses his Credit and Reputation by such injurious Treatment. It will be better therefore to drop the Complaint, 'till we ourselves are free from the Vice complained of; since Accusations will be only Aggravations of our own Guilt, and the Judgment we pass upon them, be only pronouncing Sentence against ourselves.

The seventh Complaint is, *that they come to Church not from a Sense of Duty or Devotion, but to make an Appearance, and see the Modes and Fashions of Dress.*—Allowing it to be true, is it not better to come in any Manner, than not to come at all? Is it not better,

better, than to set a bad Example to Servants and Dependants, by junketting at home, or taking Pleasure abroad? It may in the End have this good Effect, that as they are there shewn the Way to Heaven, it may be fairly presumed, and charitably hoped, that some Time or other they will take it into Consideration, and think about going thither: But no such good Effect can be expected, or even hoped for, when the Service is not only neglected, but Attendance not given.

That their Behaviour is offensive to the pious and devout, is easier said, than proved: For where true Devotion is, there the Mind is so intent upon the Heavenly Subject, as neither to see, nor regard, nor attend to any other Object. We may therefore justly suppose, that those who make the Complaint, are but little acquainted with the Nature or Practice of Devotion; and the pious and devout, who are offended, to be those who are as fond of gazing, as the others of being gazed at, and use this Plea to excuse and palliate their own Negligence and Irreverence.

It is much to be wished, that there was a little more Devotion in both Sexes: But it should not be concealed, that they are

more regular and constant in their Attendance at Divine Worship. Whether it proceeds from a real or pretended Piety, it deserves our Praise and Commendation; since the Example is good, and it shews a Regard for Decency and Order; which cannot be said of those, who frequently absent, or only come when it suits their Humour, or the Weather will not permit them to go elsewhere.

The eighth Complaint is *against the Vice of Gaming, as if their Pride and Vanity were not sufficient to exhaust our Treasure and Substance.*—Their Conduct seems rather an Object of Pity than Resentment, when at an unfavourable Cast we see the Fair losing all the Tenderness and Loveliness of her Sex. The Fault may be extenuated, not excused. Cards and Dice, it is probable, were at first used by them to divert the many melancholy Hours they were alone: But as from an innocent Amusement Gaming has been made a Business by the other Sex, the Example has been imitated by the Fair; who think, that it cannot be criminal nor unlawful to endeavour to recover by Cards and Dice, what their Husbands have lost by Cock-Fightings and Horse Races; or if there is any Pleasure in Gaming, that they

they have a Right to partake of it, since they only hazard the Loss of what the others are not disposed to preserve. As few are in the End great Gainers by this Vice, since what has been acquired one Day, has been oftentimes succeeded by a much greater Loss the next, it would be better for both and their Families, if they were to practise it less.

The ninth Complaint is, *that they not only appear negligent in domestick Affairs, their peculiar Province, but are apt to intrude into Matters, with which they have no Concern.*—

How far it may be right, I know not; but it is prudent in the Woman, if she has a Capacity for Business, to acquaint herself with it. The Man who has a real Regard for the future Welfare and Prosperity of his Family, would encourage and indulge an useful, not a vain Curiosity. In Case of Accidents or Death, they would not be, as they too often are through Ignorance, made the Prey of the artful and designing, or for want of this Knowledge be obliged to give up a decent and comfortable Subsistence.

Little Injury, but much good, has proceeded from such a Communication. Many have proved worthy of the Confidence placed in them: And their Company has

been both serviceable and agreeable. There have been Instances, if they are rare and uncommon, which may have happened for Want of proper Encouragement, wherein that Sex has appeared with equal if not superior Advantages to us. But it is Time to have done with a Complaint, of which the Sex, if guilty, are rather deserving of Commendation than Censure, since this inquisitive Humour is exercised from pure Love and Regard for our Interest.

The tenth Complaint is *against the not imitating the Examples of ancient Matrons in Frugality and Oeconomy.*—The Complaint may be true, but it is imprudent in us to make it; unless we imagine, that from censuring Vices in others, we should be thought to possess the opposite Virtues. I wish that this was not the principal Motive for censuring. The weak and ignorant have been imposed upon by it, and led to entertain an high Opinion of those, who publickly condemn Vices, which they have been found to have had no Aversion to in private.

This Practice has been generally followed, because it has generally proved successful. It is a Practice, that should not be discouraged, where it may be followed
with

from FOLLY and EXTRAVAGANCE. 23

with Success; because it not only displays the Excellency and Amiability of Virtue, but renders Vice odious and infamous, which has oftentimes had good Effect upon the Vulgar.

But our Censures against the Fair here lose their Weight and Force; for we are alike faulty. Extravagance and Prodigality are Vices, though not universally practised in the Age we live, as some weak Persons have asserted, too visible to be denied. *Never sure was there such an Age as this*, has been the Cant Term in all Ages to represent the Follies of the People. It is a popular Expression, and therefore has been received; for the Vulgar is more fond of railing and exclaiming, than praising and commending. But for the Credit of the present Age, I will venture to assert, notwithstanding I may provoke the Resentment of modern Declaimers, that, compared with some Times, we are Saints; and though it is not so good, as it ought to be, yet there is no Reason for looking upon this Land to be an Hell, and the Inhabitants of it, a few excepted, to be Devils.

To return to the Complaint, the best Censure we can bestow upon the Sex, is to set a Pattern of Frugality in ourselves: And

it need not be doubted, but they who are fond of imitating us even in our Foibles, will not be backward in following us here. It will be in vain to urge the Necessity and Usefulness, of what our own Conduct shews, that we have a Distaste for. The best Recommendation of any Virtue is Example; which oftentimes influences, when Precepts fail. It is for the private Interest and Happiness of both to practise it, and it may be of some Use to the Publick; though it does not receive that Detriment from the contrary Practice, as commonly imagined. Those Vices tend to the impoverishing of a few, and the enriching many. Trade in some of its Branches flourishes: And as long as the Artizan, the Manufacturer, and the Merchant are encouraged, and receive the Reward of their Labour and Industry, though private Evils, they cannot be properly termed publick Nuisances. If only things useful and necessary were to be sought for and procured, as some gravely tell us, though it is not easy for them to say what is strictly useful and necessary, Trade and Commerce would be at an End; Parts and Ingenuity, which are justly esteemed a Divine Blessing, would prove a Curse; for the Support and Encouragement

couragement of which, Superfluities may be procured; when our Circumstances will not admit of such a Profusion, or it may be prejudicial and injurious to Friends or Relations, or hurtful to Self, it then becomes criminal, and is the Practice deserving of Censure.

The eleventh Complaint is, *that they are passionately fond of French Airs and the French Taste; that they eat, they drink, they dress, they speak, they visit, they salute after the French Manner; that our Country Manufactures are no longer agreeable, than as they imitate the Modes of that Nation; that not only their Sons and Daughters are to have their Education amongst them, but even their Philis's and Chloë's * are not the Things, unless they were born there, or of French Extraction, or have been brought up under a French Master.* The Complaint is, indeed, just. It is too evident, that British Simplicity and Modesty have been exchanged for French Foppery and Levity. But is the other Sex less fond of these Things? Are there not frenchified Gentlemen, as well as Ladies? Take a Turn into the Mall, and you will meet with as many Apes as Butterflies. Both Sexes are so strangely metamorphosed, that
one

* Names of Lap-dogs.

one seems to be a Stranger in one's own Country. If the one have their French Milliners and Tire Women, the other have their French Barbers and Taylors: If Mademoiselle is to dress the Lady, Monsieur is to finish the Gentleman: If strong Waters are imported for the one, rich Wines, &c. are imported for the other: Both have their dressing Tables, their Paints, their Washes, their Nippers, &c. There seems to be so little of the English about them, that if it was not for the Language, you would take them for Foreigners.

Both Sexes have too much followed the Effeminacies of the French. Where Circumstances will admit, nay even beyond Circumstances, the Fashion prevails; from the Lady of Distinction to the meanest Servant of the Kitchen. In many Families, it is hard to distinguish, the Mistress from the Maid. Their Wages, it is well known, will not make that Appearance; and from whence the Support comes, has been severely felt by many. But we may rather wish for, than expect a Change in the lower Class, unless the great first set the Example; for Mankind have, in all Ages, been fond of imitating their Superiors. However, whether French Fashions
are

are laid aside or not, the fair Sex cannot be justly censured for following them, since the Men are equally blameable.

The last general Complaint is, *that they have been, in all Ages, and still are, the Cause of much Evil; many tragical Events are recorded in ancient History, occasioned by their Lust, Pride, or Vanity; modern Times have also experienced their Power and Influence; in private Families, as well as in States and Empires, they have been felt.*—I shall not here recriminate, and prove from History, ancient and modern, that they have been the Cause of more good than Evil: But allowing the Complaint to be just, Would you have the Sex to be extinct? For none other Remedy can be applied. The Situation of Adam will acquaint you, how comfortless and disconsolate your Situation would be, if the Request was granted. Your Philosophy would be of little Use here, as you are made of the same Materials, and have the same natural Passions and Affections.

There have been some, who have expressed an Aversion to Females; but in many this has happened through Disappointment or Spleen; in others from an austere and melancholy Disposition, or a Fondness for a retired and recluse Life; who
have

have been equally averſe to the Converſation of Men as Women, and have not been leſs Enemies to Society than to human Nature: But even ſuch have found it not a little difficult to conquer a Paſſion, which the Supreme Being, for wiſe and excellent Purpoſes, implanted in us; and many of theſe Pretenders to Aſterity have been detected in unlawful Gratifications, and others in Actions, which Decency requires to be nameleſs.

With all their Evils it is better to retain them amongſt us, and be content to take them, as our Church directs, for better or worſe; ſince it would be the worſt Miſfortune, that could happen to us, not to have them at all. If we are not wanting in Tenderneſs and Affection, we ſhall have no Reaſon to repent of the Choice; we ſhall live happy and comfortable; as otherwiſe we muſt be, and that juſtly, unhappy and miſerable.

If the Women of this, differ much from thoſe of the Patriarchal Age, are not ſuch fond Mothers, nor ſuch obedient Wives; if they are not ſuch, as they were in the early Days of Chriſtianity, remarkable for their Piety and Devotion; if they are not, according to the Apoſtles Rule, decent in Apparel and
modest

modest in Behaviour, the Men cannot reproach, nor upbraid them; since these Things chiefly happen through their bad Example, or Approbation, or to please and gratify their Pride and Vanity. Besides, have they less degenerated from the Ancients? A Reformation is wanting in both Sexes; it would be greatly for their Advantage and Interest to mend their Manners, and correct their Taste: But the Men must lead the Way; and when they appear sober and temperate, love their Pleasures less, mind their Business more, spend their leisure Hours with their Families at home, not be sitting and trifling abroad, nor take delight in Fopperies, which it is rather the Misfortune, than the Fault of the Sex to be engaged in to please and humour us, I will venture to affirm, that there will be no Opportunity for complaining of their Gaiety, Vanity, and Extravagance.

I might now consider the Complaints of the Fair; but as this would rather prevent, than procure a Reconciliation between the Parties, it is more prudent to drop them: And it would be in some Sort needless, since it is presumed, that no one of our Sex could, with Decency and Propriety, attempt a Vindication, and it cannot be expected,
that

30 *The FAIR SEX vindicated, &c.*

that the Injured would undertake it. It is therefore hoped, that the one Party will cease from Complaints, and the other from affording Matter of Complaint ; that each will be more ready to correct, than find Faults ; to forgive little Indiscretions, which, as it is the Weakness of Human Nature to be frequently guilty of, should rather kindle Compassion than Anger in our Breast ; and to bear with, and love each other.



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LETTERS



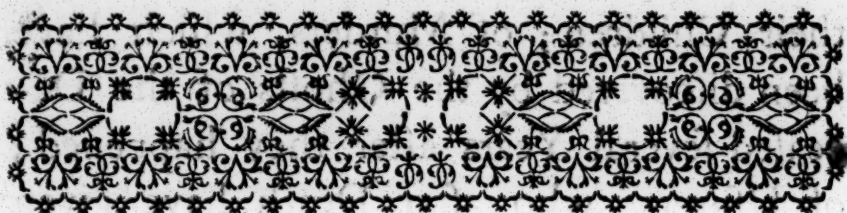
L E T T E R S

Lately received from the

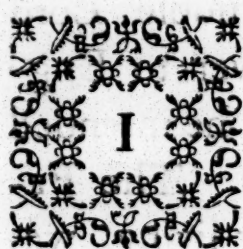
D E A D.







LETTERS *lately received from*
the DEAD.

 T may be expected that some Account should be given, how I came by the following Letters; it being by some deemed absurd to suppose a Communication between the Living and the Dead, or an Appearance of any from thence, when they are departed hence. What has brought this Opinion into Discredit, is the fiery Chariot, whose Riders Imagination has represented to be without Heads: But the Reverse is true, if we may rely upon the Testimony of Persons of Credit and Reputation, who have really seen it. Fairies we know are still in being, and Ghosts play in Country Church-yards as frequent as ever. This is confirmed by the Evidence of several

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substantial Farmers *. I can produce many Instances of Parents, who have appeared to their Children; of Murders, which have been discovered by the Ghosts of the Deceased several Years after they happened; of Usurers, who after Death have given away large Sums of Money, which in their Life-time they had concealed under Ground; of Guardians, made honest by the Appearance of departed Souls; of Persons, seen in England the same Day they were buried at Jamaica. A late noble Lord could not die, till he came over to England to acquaint his Lady, that he intended to depart the next Day at Paris. The Father of an eminent Divine now living, was visited by a strange Woman, who acquainted him, that she was to be his Wife; it accordingly happened, and he knew her

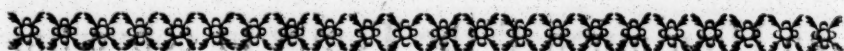
* I once ridiculed the Opinion of Fairies, and believed with many others, that they were only the Creatures of Fancy: But having lately been in Company with a learned Farmer, and talking upon the Subject, he expressed a great Surprise at my Ignorance, and acquainted me, that they were the Pharisees, who excited the People against our Saviour; and for that Action are condemned to dance upon the Earth till the Day of Judgment. He quoted Scripture in Proof of his Assertion, whose Authority I could not deny, nor dispute.

to

to have been the same, who had appeared to him, by her Topknot. As Ghosts then have been every where, and upon different Occasions, the following Account cannot seem improbable.

Having Occasion to go to Chelsea, upon my Return I called at the Abbey, and spent an Hour amongst the Tombs in conversing with the Dead. As I was retiring, I heard a rumbling Noise behind me, and turning about, I saw a Hand extended: At first I was not a little surpris'd at such a strange Adventure, and doubted of the Reality of the Appearance; but approaching nearer, in order to be satisfied, the Hand disappeared, and a Parcel laid at my Feet: When it was opened, I found in it, amongst others, the following Letters, which, on the Cover, I was directed to communicate to the Public. What is improbable, or incredible in this Account? There are many Persons, who are ready to attest, that they have both heard, and seen strange Things in the Habitations of the Dead: For what Purposes those Appearances were made, are not known; they being terrified at what they saw and heard, had not Courage and Resolution to wait the Event. That the following Letters are genuine, will appear

from the Matter contained in them ; which could not have been known or invented here, as it must be acknowledged, that in Regard of particular Tranfactions in the other World, we must be absolute Strangers.



L E T T E R I.

From a PAPIST to a PROTESTANT.

IN the other World we form our Judgment of Things from Appearances ; we have neither Time nor Ability to examine into their several Relations and Connections. We are apt to be misled by Prejudice, and to look upon every Thing to be right and good, which we would have so to be. It frequently happens, that we offend in that, which in others we have condemned. From the Reformation to this present Time you have treated us Catholicks, as a credulous and superstitious People. The Infallibility of his Holiness has been long the Subject of Mirth and Ridicule. Is Mother Church less infallible ? You have indeed reformed and rectified many Errors and Abuses ; but you find it for your Interest,

as

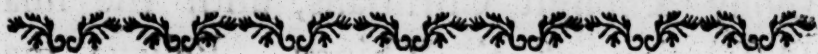
as well as the See of Rome for her's, not to give up an absolute Authority. You can never make Men embrace and receive human Appointments and Decisions in religious Matters, unless they have a Ray of Divinity, supported by the Civil Power; for Men are so obstinate, so ignorant, or so carnal, that they cannot understand or credit this Spiritual Claim, unless they are under Apprehensions, or in Danger of suffering something disagreeable from rejecting or opposing it. The Plea for introducing Infallibility into our Church was very plausible, and the Doctrine itself seemed to have been necessary, to prevent or put a Stop to Heresies and Schisms amongst Christians. But you well know, that it became the Sanction to all the Errors, Abuses and Corruptions, that have prevailed amongst the Catholics. Do you imagine that the Infallibility of your Church is more infallible than the Church of Rome? That all the Injunctions of the one are right, of the other wrong? Both shelter themselves under the Authority of Scripture; but are they willing to submit to its Decision? Is it not plainly repugnant to any such Opinion? Do not many treat it with Contempt both in their Writings and Conversation? Are not others

far from believing, though for secular Views they admit, all that the Church has required to be received? And so long as she has divine Adoration offered to her, there will neither be Union amongst Protestants, nor Reformation amongst Catholicks. Let human Appointments have Weight, when directed by a Spirit of Moderation; when they do not encourage nor occasion Divisions, and Men are not condemned for Hereticks and Schismatics, if they do not think every thing so appointed to be agreeable to, and consistent with, the plain and simple Declarations of Scripture. Such Men meet with a better Treatment in this, than they commonly do in the other World. I know, that you are not deficient in Arguments to support the Injunctions of your Church, nor are Defences wanting in Favour of the See of Rome: I know, that you find it not difficult to prove them weak and inconclusive. And are not yours so thought by a great Number of Protestants? The Custom of equalling human with divine Authority, has been the Plague and Scourge of Christendom, ever since Christianity was protected by, and incorporated with, the Civil Power; and in all Probability will continue to prevent Peace and Harmony

mony amongst Christians, until the final Dissolution of all Things. Believe me, Sir, that Popes are not the only Men here condemned for Folly and Presumption in pretending to Infallibility: Some of your Protestants are in the same Condemnation. You would be surpris'd to see, how familiarly they converse, who, when living, reviled, abused, and censured each other. They are conscious to themselves, that they exacted an implicit Obedience with little Reason and great Severity. The Rulers of both Churches would do well to consider the Prejudice done to Religion by this arbitrary Proceeding, and not be so much conceited of their own Wisdom and Learning, as to forget Human Defects and Imperfections; for they will be found to have been not only fallible, but extremely weak and ridiculous: And will go near to suffer for Folly and Inhumanity in this World, for what with you is wrongly termed, pure Love and Zeal for Religion.

From your affectionate Friend,

A. P.



L E T T E R II.

From a TORY to a WHIG.

YOU know that I was a zealous Friend of the Church, and very active upon all Occasions against the Ministry ; though I could give no Reason, why I loved the one, or hated the other, excepting this, that I believed the former to be always in the right, and the latter to be always in the wrong. These Principles I found it for my Interest to encourage, and others as readily imbibed them, led on by the same Motive, Weakness, or Malice ; for Raillery and Declamation are Things well pleasing to Men of little Minds, who are always prejudiced against superior Merit and Power. Though your Conduct is the reverse, yet you are not less ridiculous and credulous. You are as lavish in Commendation, as I was in Censure ; you approve, and I condemned every thing ; I thought that they could do nothing right, you that they can do nothing wrong ; I therefore opposed, and you consent to all their Measures ; in so doing we thought to distinguish ourselves as the
Friends

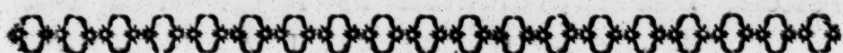
Friends of the Public. I, and several others of your Party, never imagined, that we should be treated as its Enemies. We were informed, that we professed to serve the Public, but intended only to serve ourselves; that some flattered, and others exclaimed against Men in Power, because the former courted, and the latter envied their Honours; that both would have been well pleased, and only wanted to have been in the same Situation. I now consider Things in a different Light; that Ministers can no more foresee future Events, than myself; that they are oftentimes obliged to act from the Representations of others, and cannot be acquainted with all the particular Circumstances of Things; that as it is their Business to procure the best, so is it the Business of the opposite Party to publish the worst Intelligence: And that those, whom they make Choice of for that Purpose, do not always, either from Ignorance or Imposition, communicate the Truth. Their Mistakes therefore are oftentimes to be reckoned rather a Misfortune than a Fault; and that they are not always successful, (which no one can be) may be more owing to the Misconduct of others than their own. As Men, they have their Weakness, and cannot

not no more than others be without their Foibles. The one Party should only oppose them in what is bad, the other only encourage them in what is good; not blaming them for Accidents, which they could not foresee; and if foreseen, they might not have been able to have prevented. This, Sir, will be of real Service to your Country: But the Riots and Quarrels, the Diffentions and Animosities, which the contrary Behaviour occasions, and which yield no longer Satisfaction than whilst Company is present and Wine inflames, is sacrificing the Good of your Country for a Bottle, and laying up in Store eternal Sorrows for yourself. What future Calamities are now providing for those, whom you are training up in Party Principles! Consider, what Injustice has been done to Merit, what Injuries countenanced, what Violence committed, what Offences overlooked, and what Villainies excused by the Spirit of Party. How have Slander, Calumny and Reproach, how have Oaths, Perjuries, Drunkenness, Bribery and Corruption prevailed and been authorised by it! How many Persons of the most infamous Characters, remarkable only for their Intemperance and Debauchery, have not only been esteemed and caressed,

ressed, but represented as Men of a fair and unblemished Reputation ! And the only claim to such extraordinary Favour was the being of a Party. This is thought with you and your Opponents to be a reasonable and sufficient Excuse for all the Vices and Follies, which you or they may have committed : But you will be much mistaken, when you come here. Many eminent and zealous Tories and Whigs, who, in the other World, were reputed wise, honest, sincere, and loyal, are condemned to suffer in this as Fools, Knaves, Sycophants and Traitors. What you enjoy, I once experienced ; what I endure, you cannot know, and may you never feel. You have Prudence and Discretion ; the proper Use of them will prevent your suffering the Miseries of your old Adversary,

A T O R Y.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R III.

To a BLOOD.

YOU cannot imagine how strangely my Condition is altered, since I left the other World. There was Mirth and Humour, with rare and delicate Fare : But those Halcyon Days are no more. Dulness and Sorrow have succeeded. For those few momentary Joys I am to suffer, I fear, an Eternity of Pain. I, who was once Company for a Lord, am registered amongst the Fellowship Porters ; for you must understand, that Persons guilty of the same Vices are in this Place put together, of whatever State and Condition they be. To sin like a Gentleman, or with Decency, is allowed to be no Excuse for the Crime, and claims no Favour, though it may keep up a tolerable Reputation with you. French Claret and Old Hock are upon a Level with Porter and Geneva. To have been merry with his Grace at the King's Arms, meets with no better Treatment, than if I had got drunk with his Groom at the Cellar. As I had a good Pipe, was a little versed in Politics, and

and full of pleasant Stories, I was always esteemed the agreeable Companion. These Qualifications introduced me into a Variety of Company : And I now find, that it was more to please themselves than me, that I was so much courted and careffed. As I always paid my Part, which a Trifle did not discharge, and to keep Company with Persons greatly superior to me in Birth and Fortune, I was forced at last to sell the Family Estate ; which supported me a few Months, and then I expired, leaving this Character behind me, that I had lived a merry Life, though a short one. The Reflection upon what is past administers no Consolation, but much Sorrow in this dismal Place. My midnight Frolicks and Debaucheries, breaking the Lamps, knocking down the Watch, bullying my Landlady, talking bawdy to her Daughter, continual Drinking, Swearing, Gaming, Wenching and Rioting, with all the other Accomplishments necessary to constitute the true Character of a modern Hero, have only served to make me completely miserable. Several of your merry Fellows are in the same sad Condition. And I find, as the Humour increases by forming themselves into Societies, that we are likely to have many more Bloods, Bucks, and

and jovial Fellows amongst us. As we are here known to be rank Cowards (though in the other World we looked upon ourselves as Bravo's) not having dared to encounter with any, but whom we knew to have been incapable either of injuring us or defending themselves, nor ever with such but in the Dark and by Surprise; we were ordered to the lowest Place in Sots Hole, to be hooted at and buffeted by those terrible Fellows, called Carmen, Porters, and Draymen; whom, when living, we always carefully avoided, and dreaded an Engagement with: For, though fond of drubbing others, we were horribly afraid of being drubed ourselves. We petitioned to have the Sentence reversed, but to no Purpose. I do assure you, that the Bloods look very cool upon the Matter, and appear very fullen and dispirited. I here met with three young Fellows of good Repute in your World, who acquainted me, that they had killed themselves in endeavouring to live. Upon explaining themselves, it appeared, that by keeping much Company and hard Drinking, to procure a greater Trade, they had drank themselves into Fevers, Consumptions, &c. and expired with this Satisfaction, that they had spent much, got little, saved

saved less, made their Families unhappy, and themselves miserable. Turning from these, I met with some old Soakers, who were Members of several Clubs, Lodges, Societies, &c. who are condemned for defrauding their Creditors, and exposing their Families to Want and Penury at home, to support this good Fellowship, as they termed it, abroad. Those Meetings which are supposed to be constituted for agreeable Conversation and innocent Indulgence, are treated here as tending to none other End, than the comfortable Support of Vintners and Publicans, who by these Institutions become rich, at the Expence of the Health and Fortune of the Guests, and the Ruin and Destruction of their several Families. Leaving these Sots, I saw others, who had fed well at Elections and public Meetings. As the Entertainments cost nothing, they thought it to have been no Crime to have made free: But the Plea was found insufficient, as they had sacrificed their Conscience to their Belly. There were other Souls, who attempted to excuse themselves, in saying, that they had only made merry with a Friend, a Tenant, at a Wedding or Christning. They were told, that it was an odd Way of expressing Joy, or returning
Thanks

Thanks for the Favours of Providence, by acting the Part of a Brute. These are not so criminal ; but they are not without their Sufferings. If, then, you will be merry, be wise ; for if you play the Fool in the other World, be assured that you will suffer for it in this.

From your Brother BLOOD.



L E T T E R I V .

To a Frenchified ENGLISH LADY.

MY Death, you know, was occasioned by Grief for the Loss of that sweet pretty Creature Chloe*. I came here in Company with Lord Meager, who sickened at an Entertainment upon the Sight of roast Beef, and Lady Eve, who got cold at a Masquerade ; Sir Harry Tinsel, who went off in an Apoplectic Fit upon having his French Lace seized at Dover, and Madam Flounce by a Chagrin, occasioned by the Narrowness of her Hoop-petticoat ; Miss Prattle, who talked herself to Death, and Mrs. Boniface, who expired in her Closet by drinking too freely of her Cordial Waters ; Miss

Rosy

* A favourite Lap-dog.

Rosy and Lady Baldpate, who swooned away upon the Discovery of the false Hair and coloured Cheeks; Lord Fanciful, who died of the Megrims, and Lady Swell, who burst upon the Sight of a Person better dressed than herself; Tom Merryweather, who was slain by the Hip, and Lady Slander by the untimely Birth of a Natural, with 'Squire Good-Fellow and his Chaplain who had been too free with brown Nappy: There were also Master Trim the Hair-Cutter, Miss Modish the French Milliner, Mrs. Shape the Mantua-maker, and Mr. Prettyman the Mercer. These, my dear Creature, were our old Acquaintance, and all in high Life. You cannot imagine, how exceedingly our Spirits were fluttered, when we came to this filthy Place. Rose-water, Hartshorn and Cordials were called for, but in vain. Our present Punishment is monstrous; for we are obliged to appear in a Character, which we always loathed and despised, *plain English*: And what is worse, those ill-bred, unpolite, unfashionable Creatures, called Englishmen, are to be our sole Companions. You cannot think how queer we look, and how uncomfortably we live. Miss Modish the French Milliner, whilst we had her Company, was some Alleviation of

the Sorrows we endure; but we were all so excessively fond of her, that the Secret was soon known, and she was taken from us. We are now doomed for ever to associate with the Brutes, and, most barbarous and inhuman, to converse with each other in our Mother Tongue. What I advise you to do, is to discharge your French Master and Servants; away with their Perfumes, Washes, Paints, &c. You may appear to an Advantage in the other World by following their Modes; but you may credit me, you will make a most ridiculous Figure in this. Our Politeness and Taste are termed Foppery and Folly; and what is intolerable, as we pass along, we are laughed at and treated with Contempt by the very Persons, whom we were so fond and desirous of imitating. They tell us, that their Trinkets and Fashions were invented, not to please us, but enrich themselves; that they knew our Weakness, and humoured it; and with their Manners they communicated their Vices: So that they spoiled us of our Virtue and Understanding, as well as our Fortunes. Our Lords shook their Heads, and the Ladies appeared much dejected. We are all heartily sorry for our Misdoings: And grievous as our Sufferings are, we should,

should, with Content, bear them, if we could be permitted to return again and revisit your World for a few Months, to revenge these Insults of French Barbers, Tire-Women, Valets, &c. If Lady such a one knew what we suffer, she would lay aside her new Head Dress, nor would her Grace want a Frenchman to adjust her Tucker; Mrs. Cit would soon exchange her Sack for the long Tail, and Country Dick sell his short Bob for his long Hair; Sir Simon would give up his Bag for the full Bottom, and the pinched Cock would grow up to the broad Brim; Lord Guzzle would leave his Claret for Burgundy*; and Jack Taper quit his Soup and his Sallad for the English Capon and Surloin: In short, there would be a general Return to the ancient Rusticity and Simplicity, as it is termed, of British Manners, so terrible to that Nation; which at present they are not apprehensive of, and hope, by their Effeminacies and Fopperies, to vitiate your Taste, corrupt your Morals, weaken your Courage, impair your Understanding, and to conquer you by their Foibles, rather than by their Valour. As your Lord is in the M——y, you would do well to lay this

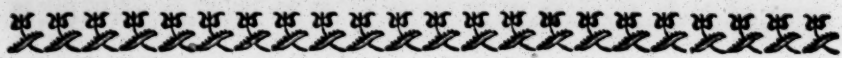
* Porter so called.

Letter before him: But whether it gains Credit or not, you may be assured, that by a Return to the British Taste, the Ladies would appear to a much greater Advantage, since their Beauty is oftentimes concealed under, or deformed by the French Modes; and Sir John English says, that it would be of considerable Benefit to Trade, encourage Industry, and promote your home Manufactories. From yours, &c.

A Frenchified English Lady reformed.

P. S. I forgot to tell you, that we had some Cits amongst us, whose aukward Imitation of the Beau Monde afforded some Diversion, and occasioned a loud Laugh. It proved of singular Service to them; for they immediately returned to their old constitutional Gravity.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R V.

From a SON to his FATHER.

I WAS just entering into Life, when I was suddenly taken out of it. You saw something in me, that made you conceive favourable Hopes, that I should one Day be a great Man, and you promised to yourself much Satisfaction. This was not the only Indearment; my filial Respect and Obedience made me still more dear to you. But why should you be inconsolable for one, who rejoices that he has left not you, but the World so soon? This early Death has made me happy; a longer Life might have made me miserable. You had filled my Mind with virtuous Sentiments; and whilst with you, instructed by your Precepts, and actuated by your Example, I was, indeed, virtuous and good: But how long should I have so continued, when removed from your Presence and Influence? The Ways of Folly seem pleasant and agreeable: And as they are more adapted to the Temper and Disposition of Youth, than the severe, but wholesome, Rules of Virtue, it is no won-

der, that so many tread the Paths, which they ought to shun. Whilst under your Government I had no Solicitation to transgress. Had my Virtue been tried, Resolutions to preserve it might have failed. Is it not better, then, that you should mourn and grieve a few Years, than that I should have hazarded the Loss of eternal Joys, to give you a little transient momentary Pleasure? How often have I heard you discourse concerning Death as Man's best Friend, as it dissipates all Sorrow, and puts an End to all the Miseries of Life, from which the greatest and wealthiest cannot be exempt. It is, I allow, natural to weep for an only Child; it would be inhuman not to do it: But Reason, when the first Grief is over, must applaud the Change. A Change from Woe to Joy; for neither Ills nor Disease, Malice nor Envy disturb the Dead. Follow then, Sir, the Advice, which you have often and tenderly administered to the Disconsolate. Consider, that the Honour, to which my Talents might have raised me, would have excited the Envy of many, the Hatred of others, and the Esteem of few. If you knew what I enjoy, you could not be so uneasy at your Loss. You had, indeed, but one Child; and had Reason to expect,

expect, that I should have proved a Blessing. And should it not afford you Comfort, when you reflect, that I did not live to be a Curse and a Disgrace to your Name? I might not have erred from the Paths, which, from my Infancy, I had been accustomed to walk in: But as your Acquaintance with History and Mankind informs you, that the Friends of Virtue have become its Enemies, you must receive some Consolation yourself, and think it more happy for me, that I did not live to make the Experiment. You will now leave the World with Satisfaction, inasmuch as all your Fears and Cares for your darling Offspring are over; who, had he not observed your Instructions, would have brought down your grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave. I am gone but a little Time before you. The Decay of Nature and the Infirmities of old Age, will quickly bring you to this Place of Rest, where we shall ever remain together, never more to part. Think ever think upon this, my Parents, and grieve no more. You are only deprived of me a few Years, to enjoy my Company to all Eternity. If it had been otherwise, you might have been happy without me. It is an Happiness to have Children; it is a divine Blessing to have

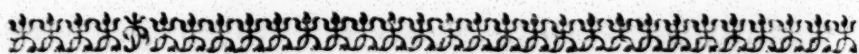
them good: And to lose them, whilst they are good, is a most singular Happiness and Blessing; for Parents know not what future Calamities, Misfortunes and Distresses, are provided for them. It should be no real Concern to the Parent, how short they live; since he who has lived well, if he dies young, has lived long enough; and those who so live, must be happy: Which is the Present Condition of

From Paradise.

Your dutiful and

affectionate Son,

S. S.



LETTER VI.

To an HONEST MAN.

IT is a just Observation, and Experience has confirmed it, that Honesty is the direct Road to Poverty. To conform to the Times, and comply with the Tempers and Humours of Men, is the surest Way to be rich. The Practice is so common, that the Disagreeableness and Viciousness of it are worn off. Not only the Vulgar, whose

whose Ignorance may be admitted as an Excuse for the Folly, follow it; but Men, in other Matters remarkable for their Prudence and Discretion, find it necessary and expedient to conform to it, if they intend to serve themselves or their Acquaintance. It frequently happens, in opposing Injustice, or not patiently submitting to Oppression, a Man only acquires Poverty in Reversion, or reduces himself to Beggary. As Poverty is accounted an Evil by some, and a Disgrace by others; as some covet Wealth and Power for the Indulgence of Self, and others for the Benefit and Service of Relations and Friends; as the Wants and Necessities of Life are many, and require a continual Supply; hence it is, to avoid the first, to procure the second, and relieve the third, so little of true public Spirit and common Honesty appear in your World: And Men are not ashamed to court the Esteem and Favour of those, even publicly applaud and commend, whom they privately laugh at and despise. Hence it is, that Men are more anxious to be great than good: And Superiority is founded not on Virtue and Piety, but Title and Fortune. They well know, that those Things make them to be feared or revered; few have Resolution
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and Spirit to contemn their Displeasure, or slight their Interest; not to fear their Frowns, nor court their Smiles. Flattery and Obsequiousness procure many Friends; Sincerity and Freedom of Speech many Enemies. The Rich and Great chuse to have their Faults passed over in Silence. The Man who refuses to submit to their grievous Impositions, treats them with none other Respect than their Virtues not their Riches claim, and dares to tell them of their Faults, is sure to smart for it. Knaves count him a Madman, others pity his Weakness, some treat him as a Fool for not practising the common Art of living well; and even those who commend his Conduct, will not assist the Man. It is hard to suffer for what merits Reward, and to be reproached and insulted for what deserves the public Praise and Applause. Many can be superior to the Misfortunes and Accidents of Life; but Calumnies and Indignities, undeserved, affect the Soul of Man. When conscious of Innocence, to have our Virtues deemed Vices, requires an uncommon Greatness of Soul to support the injurious Treatment. Few are able to withstand a public Ridicule; many, therefore, from Fear of Shame, others from a Dislike of Singularity,

city, and some from a Dread of Want, have proved wavering and inconstant. Your Character has hitherto been the Reverse. Still persist in what you have adhered to from your first Appearance in Life, not to do any thing that was base, nor submit to any thing that was mean. Let not the Afflictions which you may suffer frighten you, nor the Contempt to which you may be exposed, discountenance nor discourage you. You must not expect to be rich or great. You will have many Difficulties in Life to encounter with; they will not be less, they may be greater than you now labour under. If you cannot support Affliction, you must sink under the Weight of it; a few Years will put a Period to all your Sorrows. The Times, it has been commonly said, will not admit of plain Truth; nor is it fit that it should at all Times be spoken: But if Truth was at all Times to be spoken, Men would be as much ashamed to commit Folly, as they now seem to be above the Censure of it; they would avoid being wicked, and covet to be good. But how can Virtue appear lovely and amiable, or Vice odious and detestable, when Men, through Fear of Displeasure or the Sake of Interest, bestow Encomiums, where they
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are not due. Though Distress may be your Portion in the other World, be not cast down nor dejected; since you may be assured, that in this you will be amply recompensed. Reading and Experience convince you, that there are but few Things valuable in this Life. He seems to be the wisest and happiest Man, who looks upon it with Indifference, and only procures what may be necessary and convenient, rather than what is pleasant and agreeable; since that is not always to be purchased with Innocence, too frequently at the Expence of Conscience in Reversion. Go on on as you have begun, and you need not doubt of Happiness hereafter.

Yours, &c.

From Paradise.

W. P.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R VII.

To an INFIDEL.

THE Bible, that most sacred Repository of Nonsense, as we termed it, and the credulous Fools who believed it, always afforded Matter for an hearty Laugh. The Prophecies contained in it we judged to have been the Contrivances of cunning and artful Knaves, and the Miracles recorded to have as little of true Divinity, as the Persian Fables or Tales of the Fairies: And the whole to have been the Invention of Enthusiasts; whose Successors, the Gentlemen of the black Gown, propagate and keep up the Solemnity of the Delusion, not for the Sake of Religion, or from any great Opinion of its Authority, but a Regard to the Profits arising from it, and the Power of governing and directing the Consciences of Men. Notwithstanding all that Wit, Parts, and Learning could do, to make things Holy as ridiculous, as they were to us contemptible; and to shew that in all the different Religions, and various Sects and Parties

ties proceeding from them, from the first Age of their civil Establishment to this present Time, the End proposed was one and the same, the Acquisition of Wealth and Power; I am now convinced that the Authority once ridiculed, is most sacred. You may believe the Dead, for they can have no Motive to deceive or impose upon you. At your sober Intervals you was wont to say, that though Religion had strong Appearances of Falshood and Imposture, it might be true. You always acted indeed, as if you believed it to be false: But you should act in such a Manner, that whether Religion proves true or false, your Prudence need not be impeached, nor your future Happiness endangered. What is possible may be; that it will not, you cannot now know; but you have Time, and as you do not want for Discretion in Matters of less Moment, I hope. that you will endeavour to provide again at the worst Event. For Fear of Superstition I fell into the same Error with you, and gave myself up to Incredulity. This would have been less criminal, if when I ridiculed Religion, I had adhered to the Practice of her Laws, which I acknowledged to have been wise, just, and good. The Love of Pleasure being inconsistent

consistent with the Belief of Religion, I could not gratify the one, unless I resigned up the other. It did not suit with my Temper and Constitution to submit to any Restraint, though useful and necessary; I therefore became indifferent towards Religion; and examined the Proofs offered in Support of its Evidence with less Care, Seriousness and Attention, than the Objections raised against it: And finding that there was no Toleration for Vice, I was easily wrought upon to condemn, what condemned me, according to our favourite Maxim, that if Religion was against us, we were to be against Religion. We looked upon ourselves as reasonable clever Fellows in the other World, and we outwardly appeared to be of a pleasant and chearful Temper; but many of your old Acquaintance are now sensible, that it was meer Affectation, and confess that in the Absence of Company they had some secret fore-bodings of what they suffer; that Solitude produced many unpleasant Reflections, and though when abroad they could laugh at and ridicule the Christian Notion of a future State of Reward and Punishment, yet, alone, they wished to enjoy the one, and dreaded the Severity of the other. Our Reason served

to

to make ourselves obstinate, to deceive the weak and ignorant, and to support and establish Vice and Immorality upon a pretended Principle of Virtue and Goodness. We pleaded Reason as an Excuse for our Unbelief, but the Plea was insufficient; for we were informed, that there would have been no Exception against Religion, if our Practice had not been inconsistent with it; that no honest Man could be an Enemy, to what is calculated to promote and encourage all that is truly great and good, and to discountenance every thing base and wicked; that allowing the Evidence to be dubious and uncertain, the Man who professed himself to be the sincere Friend of Virtue would incline to that Side, which was most likely to promote and advance her Cause; that if it had no better Authority than human, yet as Members of Society we were obliged to receive and treat it with Decency and Respect; and if it had been false, a Regard for the Welfare and Interest of Mankind should have inclined us, rather to have concealed than published the Falshood, as a Concealment would prevent many Excesses, and keep some sober, who are rather virtuous through Fear than Choice: But a Publication would open a
Door

Door to Licentiousness, and be not less a private than publick Calamity. We were all so well satisfied of these Truths, that we sneaked away without offering any Reply; and we stand condemned, not for using, but abusing human Liberty, not only for employing Reason to support and propagate Error in Opposition to Truth, but to defend and excuse our Vices. These Things may be lightly esteemed of by you; but from Experience I do assure you, that they will prove of serious Consequence. I am now satisfied, that Credulity is preferable to Infidelity, because there is the least Hazard in it. It is reasonable to suppose, that he who has Respect to the Honour of God, the Good of Man, and self Government, if he exists in another State, should rather be rewarded than punished: But the Infidel, whose Character is the Reverse, must look for and expect, not a Reward, but Punishment. The Difference, Sir, is this, that the one must be happy, if he should exist hereafter, and cannot be miserable, if he does not: But the Happiness of the other consists in a Non-Existence, if otherwise he must be miserable. You have Time to prevent the latter and enjoy the

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former.

former. If you persist in the old Way, you will undoubtedly suffer.

From your's &c.

A RATIONALIST.



LETTER VIII.

To a formal CHRISTIAN.

WHEN living, no one was more regular and punctual in their Attendance at Church, where I offered up my Devotions with great Appearance of Piety and Sanctity. Like good King David, and the captive Prophet, I was frequent at Prayer, and looked upon those who did not so attend, to have been very wicked and ungodly. From this Behaviour I judged myself to have been a good Man and a good Christian, and thought it would have merited some Reward; but in this I have been deceived, as I had been in the Nature of true Devotion. I was told, that Business was no more to be neglected than Religion; that had I been less devout, I should have been more honest; that to maintain a Shew of Piety, I had exposed my Family to Want;

Want; and by a vain and idle Repetition of Prayers I had been Deaf to the Demands of my Creditors. Thus by a too close Attention to the Words of the Apostle, *to pray always*, I had forgot two other Precepts of equal Importance and Obligation, *to owe no Man any Thing*, and *to provide for my own Household*. These Things I ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone; for there can be no true Piety towards God, which is accompanied with Injustice to Man. As I had prayed too much, so there are others here, who have prayed too little; as I had paid a too great Regard to Spirituals, so they to Temporals. From an extraordinary Attention to Business they had neglected their Devotions. Wealth and Power had so wholly engrossed their Affections, that Religion was only observed at Intervals, out of Decency, and with the View of Interest, as something may be acquired from the meer Reputation of Goodness without the Practice. We have also amongst us some Protestant Hermits; who, when in the other World, condemned and despised the Things in it. They hated Wealth and Grandeur, and railed at the Pleasures of Life, because they could not procure, nor enjoy them; and were

content with an hard Subsistence, because Poverty or Inability confined them to it. They were informed, that their Contempt of the World was not founded on Judgment and Experience, but was the Effect of Constitution or Fortune; that they had either no Relish for, or could not purchase the Enjoyments of it; that they declaimed against the Pleasures of it, because through Folly, or Imprudence, or a too free Indulgence, they had deprived themselves of them; that the true Contempt of the World did not consist in giving up the Comforts of it, (for it was both Nature and Duty to procure what may be productive of Happiness, and prevent Sorrow and Misery) but in doing nothing that was mean, base or wicked to obtain them, and in sacrificing them, and even Life itself, rather than do an Injury to Virtue and Religion, by procuring them with Dishonesty, or enjoying them with Remorse. This is the Behaviour, that gives some Merit to Poverty, and the contrary makes it infamous to be rich. Here are likewise some grave and solemn Christians, full of Spleen and Melancholy; who, from a natural or an acquired Sourness of Temper, hated every Thing that was pleasant, and looked upon it to be criminal

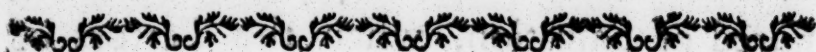
riminal even to smile; to be chearful they accounted the Sign of a loose Disposition, and to frequent Places of Diversion was to go to the Devil headlong. They were told, that they had given a very unfavourable and unjust Representation of Religion; that Amusements were necessary to refresh the Mind and recreate the Body, and were only to be deemed criminal, when they vitiated the Morals, or hurt the Constitution; that those who abstained from such Places, were not better Christians than those who frequented them, when the Effects mentioned did not follow; that Religion does not prohibit the Pleasures of Sense, though she condemns an immoderate Gratification; that as the Design of it was to make us better Men, those who were so, must be of a chearful not a gloomy Countenance; that if the former Appearance was not always to be accounted a Sign of internal Goodness, the latter was certainly the Representation of a bad Temper, if not a wicked Heart; and proceeds rather from Constitution or a Consciousness of Guilt, than an absolute Aversion to innocent Mirth and Humour; for Goodness is an Enemy to Dulness. How can the Man, whose Hands are pure from Sin, and whose

Passions with the Affections are governed by, and in Subordination to the Laws of Reason and Religion, be otherwise than of a joyous and pleasant Countenance? Moroseness, Peevishness, Melancholy and Lowness of Spirits, if they do not always, yet generally proceed from something very opposite to and inconsistent with Religion. You find, Sir, from what I have written, that a Man may be always upon his Knees, and yet be no Christian; that he may give up the Enjoyments of Life, without any future Benefit in Reversion; that he may roar and exclaim against Diversions, &c. without any Principle or Merit; that his pretended Sanctity is sinful, his Austerity foolish, and his Exclamations absurd and ridiculous. Believe me, all these queer Fellows are likely to suffer here, for what in the other World they flattered themselves, that they should be rewarded. You have Time, if you have any Prudence and Sense left, to prevent the Misery in yourself: And, I hope, this seasonable and friendly Advice will not be neglected.

Your's, &c.

G. W.

LETTER



L E T T E R IX.

To a METHODIST.

I N the other World I was one of your Sect. Before Conversion I was a most wicked Fellow. By a too free Indulgence of self, my little Fortune was soon squandered away, and I was reduced to a bare Subsistence. In this Situation my past Follies, which had been the Cause of my Sufferings, came into my Mind. I was distressed and afflicted with Poverty and Guilt: And I knew not how to remedy the one, or remove the other. Reflection threw me into Melancholy. In a Fit of this kind I was advised to take a Turn to the Tabernacle; where the Subjects treated of were *spiritual Feelings, divine Illuminations, and Assurance of Salvation.* They were so artfully handled, and with such seeming Piety and Sincerity, that they met with a too kind Reception. I entertained them, not because they were true, but were at that Time very agreeable to my Condition; for I never enquired or examined into the Reasonableness and Consistency of the Doc-

trines with the sacred Scriptures. To be assured of Salvation, when the Terrors of Guilt were upon me, was very comfortable. My Imagination being thoroughly heated, I soon embraced the Delusion, and felt the saving Grace within me. I never thought, nor suspected these Feelings to have been produced by Conceit, Fear, or Disease. The Doctrine of Assurance, when first heard, did, I confess, appear somewhat strange; but I did not long stand out against it, because I was informed, that if I was not assured of my Salvation, I might be of my Damnation; I therefore refused the Evil, as it was then thought, and chose the Good. Hence I became vain, presumptuous and secure; and from an Opinion, that I could do no wrong, being in a State of Perfection, I considered not, nor regarded the wrong which I did. Since I have been here, I have seen better into the Nature of Man; that he can no more cease from Sin, than he can cease to be; that his Virtue and Innocence are surrounded with many alluring and inviting Temptations, which frequently steal upon him in unguarded Moments, when least suspicious of Danger; that he is, and whilst he continues to be mortal, cannot but be guilty of many Failings, Errors and

and Mistakes, which are sufficient to humble the lofty and aspiring Thought, and to create an Opinion, that he is not good enough to go to Heaven, rather than make him confident, that he shall go thither. An Opinion which has great Danger in it; for Presumption begets Security, Security Indolence, and Indolence is the Parent of Sin and Folly. I should have been now happy, had I, when under the Conviction of past Follies, attended to the Scripture Doctrine of Repentance, regulated my Conduct by it and Reason, and not have relied upon an instantaneous Conversion, and I know not what secret and invisible Workings and Operations of the Holy-Spirit upon me; which I find to have been the quickest, but not the safest Way of getting free from Vice. What now surprises me is, that I should ever have adopted this Doctrine of Assurance, since our Apostles said, and their Disciples know, that after this Assurance received they may relapse into Sin; be doubtful and even despair of their Salvation. The Causes why I think differently from what I formerly did, are the Coolness of my Head, the Return of Reason, and the Discharge of Melancholy. You often upbraid the Devil for reporting you to be
Madmen,

Madmen, Enthusiasts, &c. You accuse him of buffetting you, exposing you to Temptations, and by his Tricks sometimes deluding you into them; you charge him with checking and obstructing the Progress of the good Work, and the false and scandalous Representations given of your Persons, Characters and Tenets. Believe me, from all this the Devil is quite clear and innocent; he only fears, lest you should be accounted mad in this World, and your Enthusiasm be rather an Object of Pity than Resentment; he has a Feeling in your Feelings, an Assurance in your Assurances; your Enemies are his; he hates and detests the Doctrine of good Works not less than you; he has Faith in the Lord Jesus, and acknowledges and agrees with you, that he cannot of himself do any good; he pronounces Damnation upon all those, who differ from you, not having his true saving Faith, and heartily and sincerely wishes that they were all damned, and that the Priests, those false Prophets as you call them, who have been long at Enmity with him, had no more of Religion than you allow them to have. As he entirely agrees with you, and is willing to assist you in every Matter, he thinks that you have done him wrong,
by

by asserting Morality to be the Child of the Devil; for no one can be a greater Enemy to it than himself; he has it in such Abhorrence, that he will not suffer one of its Practicers to be in H—ll; he was afraid, that a Doctrine which from the first Age of the World he had exploded and ridiculed, would never more after the Publication of Christianity have been treated with Contempt: But he is glad to hear, that you have once more enlightened the Ways of Darknefs. You have accused him of being the Author of the Religion of Nature, and the Use of Reason in Matters of Revelation: So far from being the Author of one or the other, that he joins with you in crying down both as impious, monstrous, ridiculous and absurd. He wonders, that you can think him to be so much wanting to his Interest, as to have introduced Notions in direct Opposition to it. Implicit Faith and Obedience are his favourite Doctrines. He had more Subjects, when they were more generally received. The Reformation, he says, gave him a terrible Blow; he has ever since that Time been in Fear of Mortality: But now hopes through your kind Assistance to revive, and that Men will no more see the Folly and Weakness of Immorality and Infidelity

Infidelity in the Study of Nature, nor the Beauty and Excellency, the Reasonableness and Expediency of Revealed Religion, by a candid and strict Enquiry into the End and Design of it; that Sectarists and Hereticks may daily increase, and Ignorance and Superstition once more prevail and triumph over Reason and Religion. Another Crime with which he is falsely charged, is creating a Despondency in the Minds of your Followers; so that those who have been regenerate, and were by the Holy Spirit assured of Salvation, have even despaired of it, and looked upon themselves as damned. He trusts, that you have accused him through Ignorance, and upon a better Enquiry you will acquit him; for such Behaviour would lessen the Number of the Inhabitants of this Place. To tell People that they are damned, would give them, he saith, an Opportunity of saving themselves. His Conduct is the Reverse, and he jointly labours with you in propagating the Doctrine of Assurance. He is very angry at your saying, that the Children of the World (meaning those who do not embrace your Opinions) are the genuine Offspring of the Devil. He positively asserts that they cannot be his Children; for he is a Spirit, and therefore
his

his Children must be, like the Parent, of a spiritual Nature. He acknowledges the Charge of being the Deceiver of Mankind, but says, that the Complaint is unjust and improper from the Mouth of your Apostles. The Diabolical Possessions which have been so frequent amongst our Brethren, he denies, having been deprived of this Power ever since the Appearance of Christ; he is content, however, to have the Notion propagated, though false; since it keeps up the Reputation of lying Wonders, which have proved of singular Service to him in deluding weak, ignorant and foolish Men. Thus much for Satan's Conduct towards you. I would advise you not to usurp a Power, which solely belongs to the Deity, in boldly pretending to know the Secrets of Mens Hearts, and impiously pronouncing Damnation upon them; nor to trust your Salvation to Opinions proceeding from an heated Imagination, or a crazy Constitution, but to the plain and simple Declarations of Scripture, which your Reason must approve to be excellent and just. To rely upon any Thing, but what is warranted and confirmed by Scripture and Reason, can yield no solid and lasting Foundation of Happiness. Your Assurance is a kind of Opiate,

Opiate, which for a Time diverts the Terrors of Guilt, but cannot totally remove the Pain. You may credit the Dead, who has learnt Conviction by Experience. When I began to see my Folly, had I attended the Service of the Church, which before I had entirely neglected, made the Satisfaction in my Power to those, whom I had injured, practised the Duties which I had omitted, and forsaken the Vices which I had committed; I should have had more of Humility and less of Pride, my Repentance would have had more of Sincerity and less of Conceit, and I should have practised Virtue and Religion, not from Fear but Love. This would have been Satisfaction beyond all my former pretended inward Motions and Feelings of the Spirit of Jesus and the Holy Spirit; to whom you ascribe the Nonsense and Absurdities, which you frequently utter, and the wild and strange Attitudes which you appear in, when the Fit comes on, and the Vapours rise. You groan, you sigh, you smile, you rave; which different Behaviour seems not to have been unaptly represented by the two Figures on Bedlam Gates. If you take a Turn into the Hospital, you may there see yourselves in living Characters, and in some of your own beloved Brethren.

Be

Be advised not to fancy nor reckon yourselves amongst God's Elect; for it is dangerous, oftentimes presumptuous. It is a Title not founded on Conceit, but an holy and unblemished Life. Think not that Conversion is to be wrought in a Moment, neither that Sinners can immediately become Saints. These Things are the Work of Time. Vicious Habits are not to be laid aside, nor virtuous ones acquired in a Day. Expect not any extraordinary Illuminations, for they are absolutely unnecessary, because the Conditions of Acceptance with God are plainly set forth to you in sacred Writ; nor trust to any other Assurances, than what that and your Conscience afford. Follow them, and practise according to what the one prescribes, and the other Dictates, and then your Hopes of Salvation will be well founded.

Yours.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R X.

To a MAN of TASTE.

THIS Place is so much crowded, that we are apprehensive, it will not contain a tenth Part of those, who are to come. Left any one should escape a Punishment adequate to his Crimes, it has been determined to draught off several for your World. The Persons ordered for Embarkation are those who had enjoyed the Pleasures of it; and were reputed Men of Taste. They are ready to depart, waiting only for the Order of Sailing. Lord Gammon is converted into a Pair of Dice. The routing Ladies are made up into Packs of Cards. Sir John Relish is become a Carp, and is to be stewed in his own Blood. His Grace and Lord Harry are tied up in Bags against Newmarket Races, and L. P. with D. C. are to be entered for the next Course; little Aaron and Driver are to be the Riders. The Country Squires and Gentlemen of the Game are to be turned out for Hares, &c. and their Whippers-in for Hounds and Beagles. Several West India Merchants are
put

put up into Barrels for Turtles. The Cits are to be made into Venison Pasties and Marrow Puddings. Captain Brag is a Surgeon's Mate, and Major Bluster, who had an University Education, Chaplain to his Regiment. Several fine Officers of the Navy and Army are to be sent into the Country, and employed in your Manufactures. A Change at first disagreeable, but it soon pleased, when the News came, that War had been declared with France. Those who were rich at the Expence of their Country, are melted down into Specie to pay off the national Debt. Lawyers are become Clients; Rectors, Curates. The St——ns are eunuchized, and to be landed at Constantinople for the Use of the grand Seignior. The Cleopatras are ordered into Convents. Your good Fellows are to be sent to Africa, and the swearing Blades to the Coast of Guiney. It would make you laugh to see the great Dons sculking about and hiding themselves. Though Men of Honour and Grandeur in your World, they are glad to give up their Titles, and mix with the common Herd. The Sufferings of those who are to remain here, will not be less than those ordered for Embarkation. For it has been moved in Council to give up

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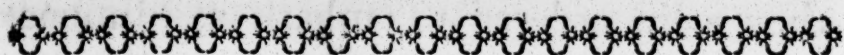
those,

those, who by their Power, Interest, Connivance, Weakness, Inability or Folly, have been the Occasion of Injury and Oppression, to the Rage and Fury of the oppressed. You cannot imagine, what a sudden and prodigious Change this Motion has made in the Speech of our great Men. We hear nothing now of their Crowns, Mitres, Stars and Garters, Scarlet Robes or Fur Gowns; no talk of Liveries and Equipages: All Distinctions are laid aside. But alas! it is in vain. There is no such Thing as appearing in Masquerade in these Parts; neither our Persons, nor Vices can be concealed. You may disguise your Actions in the other World, but as soon as you arrive here, the Cheat is known and laid open; and your Lot will be either to be punished in this, or to return again and suffer as above mentioned in the other World.

Your's

A Newmarket Cock.

LETTER



L E T T E R X I.

To a D. D.

SINCE my last we have had strange Doings in this Place. The Tables are turned upon us. We who enjoyed so much, are now in our Turn to suffer; for the Law of Retaliation has been ordained. The Subterraneous Powers have been assembled, and it was unanimously resolved, that the Rectors and Vicars should return again and revisit the Earth. The Order pleased us well at first hearing, remembering the past Delights and Enjoyments: But as soon as it was known in what Manner we were to go, you cannot think how sullen and dejected we appeared. A great Man who possessed only one thousand a Year, is set out to a Curacy in Wales, value seven Pounds. A Chaplain to his Majesty lately arrived in these Parts, is ordered back again to be Ordinary of Newgate. Several others were got ready for Transportation for the Fleet, but the Post came in and acquainted the Council, that a Marriage Act had passed; upon which

they were ordered to embark as Missionaries to America. I who had a Living of three hundred, out of which I gave my Curate, who had a Wife and Family, twenty Pound per Annum, am ordered to serve the same Cure. Others who had as much, and gave as little, are in the same dismal and deplorable Situation. Several eminent and pious Divines, who seldom or ever read Prayers, are marked down for Hackney Readers, a Shilling a Turn. Others who never preached above four Times a Year, if so often, are ordered to bawl at George's for ten Years certain; and many eminent for Jockeying, Hunting, Horse Racing, Cock Fighting and Electioneering, were ordered to be confined to their Studies, and read the Bible: A most grievous Punishment! Some other rich and dignified Clergymen, who, exclusive of their private Fortunes and Estates, possessed two, three, four or five hundred a Year, are entered upon the List of occasional Parsons, and are to read and preach according to the Prices they usually gave, four, five, six, now and then seven Shillings and Six-pence, if the Church should be larger than ordinary. I cannot give a particular Account of the several Destinations, till a particular Account

Account of the Curate's Grievances has been received. We are informed, that there are several Garreteer Parsons; we partly believe it, but hope that it is not true. Many of us wish that we had been Curates; for it is very disagreeable to suffer Pain after such exquisite Pleasures received. I send you this Letter by Stealth; for an Order was given, that no Notice should be sent to the other World of these Proceedings, lest you should repent, and escape this Punishment. Though it was warmly opposed by a grave Judge, as a needless Precaution; for though they talk much, saith he, of Faith to others, yet they themselves are very Thomas's, they will believe nothing but what they see and experience.

From your old Friend

and Sufferer,

A R E C T O R.

P. S. It is talked of here, that the Punishment of the Rectors who are not ordered to return to the other World, will be executed upon them by such Curates, who should come this Way. It was in vain to

ſpeak againſt the Cruelty and Inhumanity of the Order; for it is well known, that little Favour but much Severity is to be expected from thoſe, whoſe Reſentment we have highly provoked. However we have this to comfort us, that as there are none of them in this Place, ſo we hope that there never will be any. When the Packet comes in, we immediately aſſemble to know, if there are any arrived; you cannot think what an agreeable Surprize and Joy it is to us not to find one.



L E T T E R XII.

To the RECTORS *and* VICARS.

BY the laſt Packet we had an Account, that ſeveral new Sects have ſprung up in the Church; that they have mightily prevailed, Followers being daily gained. The Heads of theſe Diviſions are, I find, under the ſame Influence, as many of the eſtabliſhed Divines, the Love of Money; and though ſpiritual Teachers, they are worldly minded Men. Though moſt of their Followers are extremely poor and indigent, yet the Priests can ſqueeze a comfortable Subſiſtence

sistence from them. The Success they have met with, has induced others to come into the Scheme; who from Disappointment, or a Consciousness of their Inabilities, with a Mixture of Spleen and Melancholy, have commenced Preachers of Righteousness. The most prevailing Cause is the Oppression suffered from the Avarice of the rich and dignified Clergy. If many of them had had a decent Provision for themselves and Families, Innovations would never have been thought of, nor met with such Encouragement. The Necessaries of Life must be had. If the Church will not afford them, they will be sought for elsewhere. It is easy for Persons, who are full and want for nothing, to say that such Men are of little Principle; that they ought to suffer all Inconveniencies, and submit patiently to any Misfortune, rather than occasion a Division in, or separate from the Church. But all Men have not this Power over themselves. It is difficult to oppose Nature, or withstand the Gratifications of Hunger and Thirst. Poverty, though in itself not to be accounted an Evil, yet it is what most Men endeavour to avoid, and few can patiently endure. The superior Clergy are a Proof of the former, and the Novelists bear

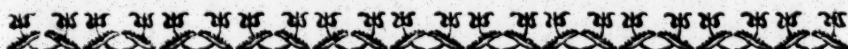
Testimony to the latter. Wealth keeps many in the Church, and Want drives others out of it: And so long as some have too much and others too little; some seek for and possess more than they want, and others have not what is necessary for the Subsistence of themselves and Families, the Peace and Unity of the Church cannot be preserved. Whatsoever you or others may think, those who foment these Divisions will not be considered here as the Authors. The Punishment will fall heaviest upon them, who compelled them thus to act. When living I was so far from oppressing my Curate, that there was little more Difference between us than the Title. I was blamed by many of my Brother Rectors for my Generosity, or rather for giving away what I did not want. However, what then administered Pleasure and Satisfaction, has now met with an ample Reward. The best Method you can pursue to put a Stop to these Divisions, which prevail too much to the Prejudice of Religion, and the Disgrace of its Professors, is to make a reasonable Provision for those who are in the Church, that they may not be tempted to depart out of it. If a Regard for the Cause, which you have most solemnly engaged to support

support and maintain cannot, let self Interest prevail with you; for if these Schisms encrease, by the Connections and Friendships they may make with Persons of Power and Influence, Pluralities may be in Danger. They are now looked upon as contemptible, but they may become considerable. Ecclesiastical History, in which you are well versed, will acquaint you with the amazing and extraordinary Events brought about by an heated Vulgar. As Religion seems to be upon the Decline in your World from the little Increase of Inhabitants in this, it is your Duty to follow every Method that may prevent the future Misery of your Flock. I do assure you, that a more generous Behaviour to your Curates, will preserve many in Union with the Church, and prevent not a few from leaving both it and Christianity. The Avarice of the Clergy, you well know, has raised considerable Prejudices against Religion; has not a little countenanced Infidelity and Immorality: For what Opinion must they entertain of its Authority and Obligation, who are guilty of a Vice so severely censured and reproved? What will be the Fate of such, Scripture plainly informs you; to it
you

you are referred. If now you credit it not, be assured that you will hereafter experience it to be true:

From Paradise.

Your's, &c.



L E T T E R XIII.

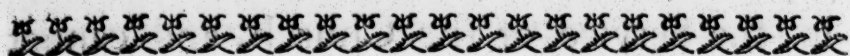
To a R E C T O R.

I Promised to send you an Account of what was done in the other World. We were very merry upon the Matter, imagining it to have been impossible. I was not a little surpris'd to find the Reverse. After I had been ferried over the Gulph, I was immediately conducted to the Exchange of departed Spirits; on the Pillars of which are fixed, after the Manner of the Exchange at London, the Vessels next to sail, the Places where, the Time when, and also of their Return. Looking round I saw the List of those, who were next to come to these Regions. The Names, Countries and Occupations were ranged alphabetically;

tically; likewise the Days of Trials for Divines, Physicians, Lawyers, Courtiers, Ministers, Merchants, Mechanicks, &c. A Fondness for my native Country, and a Curiosity to see, if any of my Friends were upon the dead List, led me to the Letter E. I had just entered upon the Letter S, when I was hurried away to a dark Room, wherein three Persons sat in the Appearance of Men, like to what you have read in Pagan Theology, surrounded with several others of the like Shape and Figure, whom I afterwards found to be the Council. At the Entrance into the Room I met several eminent Divines returning, who hung down their Heads and looked sadly. This unexpected Sight made me anticipate my Sentence. Upon being placed at the Bar I was charged with Felony. The Crime startled me not a little. I took Courage, however, and had Reason to expect an Acquittal, as my Conscience seemed to be clear, and my Accusers were Persons, whom I had never before seen nor heard of: But upon Examination they appeared to have been my Parishioners, who ever since their Death had lodged this Bill against me, for privately taking away the Hat-bands, Gloves, Rings,

Rings, &c. which they had ordered to be given to my Curate, for his extraordinary Attendance at their Funerals. I was going to reply, but was prevented by the horrid Noise and Screeks of Lying-in Women, Midwives and Nurses, who charged me with the same Crime committed at Christenings and Churchings. Finding it impossible to avoid Conviction, I marched off without offering any Answer. I do assure you, that every new Cargo of departed Souls brings to my Mind the sad Remembrance of stolen Gloves, Hatbands, &c. Upon my Return to the Exchange I found your Name on the dead List. I advise you therefore immediately to give your Curate, an equivalent for your Lady's Sack and Cardinal, or else it will go hard with you here. I send you this by the first Packet for England, and am your afflicted Friend.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R X I V .

To a CURATE.

THE last Return of the Boat to Paradise brought us three Rectors. You cannot imagine how we all stared; but the Surprise was soon over; for we were informed by a Ghost who came with them, that they had not enjoyed their Preferment a Year. Their Friends may grieve at so early a Loss, but it has proved of singular Advantage to them: Another Year might have made them miserable. This they seemed to be apprehensive of, by acknowledging that they should have followed the general Practice of doing little Duty and giving small Wages. The Exchange was very agreeable to them, and afforded Matter of Joy to us, that these Men, who had always behaved well, were not disappointed of the Reward; which no one who endeavours to merit fails of receiving. Few Men have suffered greater Afflictions than you and the rest of your Brethren, have laboured more, or had less; but hitherto you have had the singular Happiness of being
supe-

superior to them. You are now worn out in the Service of the Church, and cannot long continue in it. The Infirmities of old Age will hasten your Journey to this happy Region; where Trouble and Sorrow are felt no more. Some eminent Divines, we are informed, are desirous of extending the Distinctions which subsist in your World to this. They will find themselves mistaken: For the Prince and the Beggar, the Bishop and the Curate, the Counsellor and his Clerk, my Lord and his Coachman, her Ladyship with her Scullion, enjoy equal Degrees of Happiness, without any Displeasure or Disgust. They are well satisfied that had those of meaner Station been placed in the same Situation, and blessed with the same happy Advantages, which they enjoyed by Nature, Birth or Fortune, they would have appeared as singularly great and good. Is it not enough to be deprived of all the Comforts of Life, but we must be afflicted after Death, and retain the contemptible Name of a Curate, after the Work is finished? I used to wonder, why the Clergy were so eager after Preferment and Titles. The ridiculous Conceit mentioned, though not the only Motive, is, I suppose, a very prevailing one with some.

But

But as their Abilities are not greater, and their Labour in the Vineyard much less than those of the lowest Station in the Church, they will find an equal Reward to be not only just, but more than many of them can have any legal Claim to. You need not be under any Apprehensions of serving a Curacy here, for we are all Servants alike. Names, Titles and Places expire with Life. At the Dissolution of the World, when States, Kingdoms and Empires tumble into nothing, Crowns and Mitres are buried in the common Ruin, all Superiority and Inferiority will be at an End, those Distinctions before necessary will then be rendered useless, and there will remain only one Pastor, Jesus Christ, and one Lord the Creator of all Things.

From your old Acquaintance,

From Paradise.

A C U R A T E.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R X V.

To a R E C T O R.

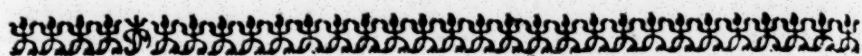
IN the other World you may remember, that I had the Reputation of a pious and learned Divine, a deep Casuist, an excellent Preacher. From this Opinion I expected to receive particular Favours in this: But was greatly disappointed, as you will find by the Sequel. Upon entering Tartarus I was ordered to appear before the Council, to receive the just Reward of past Actions. There were not wanting some Accusations from the M—d—sts, whom you know I rigidly opposed, both in my Sermons and Writings: But they were soon withdrawn. Immediately a profound Silence followed. The Cause, I afterwards found, was the unexpected Surprise of a Rector's escaping free from any Punishment. But the Surprise was soon over, the Packet which had been detained at Sea by a Storm arrived, wherein was a Letter containing the Particulars of my Life. The Letter being opened and read, it appeared that I had given my Curate, who had a Wife
and

and four Children, twenty Pound per Annum. The Value of my Living and other Places that I held were enquired into, which was upwards of four hundred a Year. I had only a Wife and one Child, to whom I could give but ten thousand Pounds. It was in vain to plead, that my Curate's Salary was as much as could be spared; my former Sanctity availed nothing; and I was condemned for Avarice here, which in the other World is termed Frugality and Oeconomy. You see, Sir, how apt we are to be misled by Custom and Prejudice; for I never thought, that what had the Sanction, and was the common Practice of Men of Reputation, would have been imputed to me as a Crime: Though I was not a little strook at my first Entrance to see many such, whom I afterwards found to be in the same Condemnation. It would have been much better for me to have consulted my future Happiness, than to have sought how to aggrandise my Family. Half that Fortune would have made me happy, and my Daughter comfortable. As there was a particular Friendship subsisting between us when living, and you are alike culpable, I send you this Letter

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to prevent your suffering, what has happened to your old Friend.

T. C.



LETTER XVI.

To the Reverend Mr. ———

WHEN upon Earth I was much addicted to the Study of Things curious and mysterious; amongst which I reckoned Prophecies. Therein I laboured, and was very nice and exact in determining what Events had happened, and what Predictions were completing. This may be thought to have been no arduous Task; but I proceeded further, I told what Events would come to pass. And here was the Misfortune, I could tell what would at certain Periods of Time happen to others, but was an entire Stranger to what should happen to myself. When I talked of the Millenium, believe me, I never thought of coming here: When I railed at the Follies of the Age, I did not imagine, that I should be convicted of worldly Mindedness. I have experienced to my Sorrow, that I had been
very

very expert in detecting the Faults of others, and overlooking my own; in looking upon that as a Virtue in myself, which I censured and condemned as a Vice in my Neighbour. You know, Sir, that in the Opinion of many I had good Preferment, near four hundred and no Family; but this did not satisfy, a Prebendary was wanted, not for the Value of it, merely the Title; the Addition of three hundred being of no Use to one, who already had enough. This Plea served very well, in Excuse for my Avarice in the other World, but was rejected here. They are thoroughly acquainted with the Human Heart, and the most secret Affections are so known to them, that they cannot be imposed upon, nor deceived. I was asked, if I intended to have been content with the Title, and to have disposed of the Salary annexed to it in Charitable Uses. The Question strook me dumb; for I found in myself no Inclination to part with the Money, and I thought it just to partake of the Reward, as I should be engaged in more Duty. I was informed, that I had not been actuated by Ambition, but Covetousness; that the Title without the Stipend would not have been courted, nor accepted. Being sufficiently convinced of

my Error, I withdrew. This, Sir, according to the Accounts here received, will be, with many others, your Case, unless prevented. As you are a well-meaning Man, have been of some Service to the World, and have been rather ignorantly, than wilfully deceived, I was permitted to write this Letter, therein to advise you to rest satisfied with the Preferment you have, not to seek for nor desire more, which cannot, if obtained, be the least Addition to your present Happiness, but may be productive of as much Misery to you as to your disconsolate Brother.

R. T.



LETTER XVII.

To a CURATE.

THE last Time we met, amongst other Things, we talked of the Hardships of the inferior Clergy. How difficult it was for a Person in that Situation to act consistent with the Dignity of his Office, and not be guilty of any Meanness, whereby his

his Character would be exposed, and himself rendered contemptible. The Smallness of his Income makes him upon a Level with the Vulgar, and the Rich treat him, as the Philistines did Samson, only to make them Sport. Being naturally of a free and open Behaviour, I had frequent Invitations; some were excused, and others accepted, lest I should seem to be disrespectful. I soon found the Inconvenience. When the Table was discharged, the Desert was usually served up with obscene Jest and Bawdy Stories; which were generally directed to the Parson, as if he was as fond of hearing, as they of uttering Nonsense. The Conversation, when in Company with their Equals or Superiors, was decent and becoming. To what can this Difference be imputed? To the Want, I will not say of Religion, but good Sense and good Manners; for the Office is alike sacred both in Rector and Curate. And it is evident, that this Inconsistency in their Behaviour proceeds not from the Respect due to Religion, but the Fear of affronting a Man as great as themselves. This Mirth and Jocularities is Folly and Madness; happy for them could it be so accounted in this World. By receiving such Treatment with

a Sneer, I lost many an elegant and delicious Repast: But I am now admitted to better Entertainment. My Regard for Decency was termed Moroseness, and I was looked upon as a Formalist for opposing Licentiousness. I was laughed at for a very weak Fellow, in not encouraging the false Humour, as it would have been of Service to my temporal Interest; but it was better to suffer any Inconvenience, than to receive the Wages of Unrighteousness, in sacrificing Religion to the Scoff and Derision of every trifling Libertine. I suffered much from not temporising, yet the little I had was enjoyed with Satisfaction, for it was procured with Innocence; and I had Spirit and Resolution enough to support me under all the Accidents of Life. What is now the Consequence? Joy inexpressible and inconceivable. The Reward is inestimable; greater than could have been expected; greater than could have been desired; much greater than was deserved. One Moment's Enjoyment here will overbalance all the Afflictions you labour under. Disregard and despise therefore the Comforts of Life, if they cannot be procured and enjoyed with Innocence. Give up the little Advantages which may arise from
humouring

humouring the Foibles of the Rich and Powerful; remembering the Glory you will receive in Reversion. Court not Preferment at the Expence of your Master's Cause, but live as you have hitherto lived, not debasing nor prostituting your Character, and you need not doubt of being happy with your old Friend.

From Paradise.

R. S.



LETTER XVIII.

To a FATHER.

Honoured Sir,

I SEND not this Letter to upbraid, but to shew that Parents are oftentimes mistaken in Kindness and Affection towards their Children, and the Measures they take to do them good are oftentimes the Occasion of their Misfortunes in Life. It is, I allow, natural for Parents to entertain an high Opinion of their Childrens Abilities. Hence it is, that they do not seek for such Employments, which they are capable of discharging with Credit and Reputation,

but such as are profitable and beneficial, not suited and adapted to their Talents, in which they can make no Figure and Appearance. Few are born with a Genius and Inclination for Letters; yet the fond Parent looks upon his Son to have as good a Capacity, and as able to be as great a Scholar as his Neighbour's. Hence the poor unhappy Youth is compelled to study, what he has no Taste for, the learned Languages; and he, who would have been a reputable Tradesman, or an ingenious Mechanick, becomes, after suffering much scholastick Discipline, an ignorant and contemptible Lawyer or Divine. How hard the Fate of the young Squire, who is obliged to go through the dull and heavy Fatigue of a School, and learn Heathen Greek; who would be more happy in whistling after his Father's Plough, and more usefully employed in feeding the Poultry, or churning with Betty and Sue in the Dairy. John, with half the Education of his young Master, would have been the better Parson. Many a Jemmy Fellow, had the Parents consulted right, would have been a compleat Valet de Chambre. Many a pretty Officer would have snapt his Fingers with a good Air in a Barber's Shop.

Shop. Many a Carman and Porter would have been an Honour and Ornament to the State, had they been properly educated. Many a young Templer, who has no Relish for Coke and Littleton, would have cut a smart Figure behind a Mercer's Counter; and Dr. R——k, by a liberal Education, might have proved a second Mead, and been Physician in Ordinary to his Majesty. Young Hobson, the Carrier's Son, was more fit for Business than your Son, who could have managed a Farm to his Advantage. It would be of great Service and Benefit to Society, and the true and real Interest of Families, if Parents first considered the Temper, Disposition and Genius of their Children, before they provided for them; not regarding what they can do for them, but what they are able and qualified to do for themselves: Then you would not so often meet with Red Coats without Courage, Black Gowns without Learning, nor full Bottoms without Brains underneath. By bringing up Children to Professions for which they have no Head, they are not only useless, but a Detriment to Society, as they expose those Professions, by their Inability, to Contempt and Ridicule. Here are Sons of Taylors, Shoemakers, Butchers,

&c.

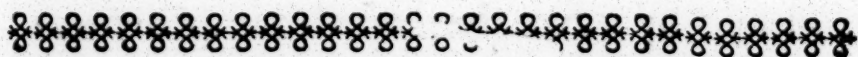
&c. who, had their natural Parts been rightly improved, would have been worthy of the Cabinet of the greatest Prince in Europe, and have deservedly filled the highest Stations both in Church and State. Here are several young Lords, Baronets and rich Heirs, who having been exercised in Studies for which they had no Capacity, turned out mere Blockheads, and had an entire Aversion to all Kind of Reading, but Plays, Novels and Romances. Infinite is the Number of those, who having neglected the Business they were qualified for, had spent their Fortunes in Trade, which they had neither Skill nor Conduct to manage. There are others who began the World with nothing, and acquired large Fortunes by what they wanted. This was the Case of your unfortunate Son, who engaged in Business which he disliked; but it was your Choice, and I submitted. I hope, Sir, your Loss in me will make you pay a Regard for the future Disposition of your Children, that they may live happily and comfortably. It is a continual Trouble and Sorrow to ingenuous Minds, not to be able to discharge the Trusts reposed in them with Honour and Reputation. I know you intend my younger Brother for
Holy

Holy Orders, on Account of a good Living in the Family: But Frank has a Desire to go to Sea. Pray, Sir, don't spoil a good Sailor, to make an illiterate Parson; nor deprive your Country of a brave and gallant Officer, to gratify the foolish Fondness of a Mother, and to save a few Hundreds more for your eldest Son Hal, who has, unknown to you, already mortgaged the estate his Uncle left him, for the Use of the Gentlemen at White's, and the Service of the Ladies at Haddock's.

From your Son,

From Paradise.

T. C.



L E T T E R X I X .

To a PARISH CLERK.

I Come up to toun a tol cuntry boy i sune
got rid of my long hare an hob nales i
whas sont by thee squire of vathers paris to
a parson they laft at poor i as an ignarant
fello but meister hew whas a man of graite
sens and knewd all the plants and stares
treated

tered me kinely and egad in a littel time i whas mad cumpany for meister from a fut-boy i whas chose thee clark of our graite church being thee onely one in paris hew culd rite and reed that wuld hav it i tollt thee curat i day hew had effronted me that i culd cumpafs salmons as wel as he when meister dyd and the old curat whent away havin sum Mune i sune got me into thee favur of thee new rector and i begun to follo bruther clarkes in talkin big to thee poor curat that i whas as grait a man and culd make as gud a parsun as any a one of them al that many of them ware old wimen in the pulput and sum culd not reed inglis and wonted a meles mete that I shuld bery cristn and marre wen i plesed and he shuld cum he had the impedanse i fantes day to bid me to put him on the sirplace and tollt me that i whas not to be in the wasttree and that i whas an ignarant fello i laft at him than but am now very dull.

I have the Sense to know, that I was not, what you and others pretend to be, very wise, but very ignorant. Behave with proper Respect and Deference to your Ministers, both Rector and Curate. Be not so vain to conceit, because any Fellow, who
can

can make a Noise, sing So, la, me, fa, and answer Amen by Heart, is fit to be a Clerk, that such Qualifications are sufficient Recommendations to the Ministry. Be content in the Station, which Providence has placed you in, for you have only just Merit enough to fill it. Never imagine, that you are able to become a Teacher, who are as yet to learn your Duty. Your Schoolmistress has indeed qualified you for the Post, which you possess: But your Friends and self knew, that you had no Capacity for greater Attainments, and therefore they put thee to what God and Nature designed thee, an handicraft Trade. Your Place is indeed more profitable than the Curate's, your collecting the Tythes, keeping the Register, doing Services for the Rector, &c. give you some Advantage over him in Respect of Temporals; but in Regard of Office and Ability you are infinitely inferior. I do assure you, that your Contempt and Disrespect of him, will be deemed equally criminal, and liable to the same Punishment, as if shewn to Religion. Mind your singing, and pronounce your Amen with an audible Voice, but meddle with nothing further, if you would not make yourself ridiculous and contemptible. Though you are an honest,
believe

believe me, for the Dead always speak Truth, that you are a very simple Fellow. If you may be able, from what you hear, to talk very well of Religion to others more ignorant than yourself; yet remember, that to say as you are taught is the peculiar Excellency of a Parrot; but to teach others what they ought to say, requires something more than the meer Faculty of Speech, an Understanding which you have not, and an Address which you cannot acquire. The best Proof that you can give of your Sense, is to be conscious of your Inabilities, to treat those with Respect, whose Merit claims, and Office demands it, and to keep that Distance in the other World, which you must observe in this. Upon my Arrival here, as usual, I mixed with the Parsons; but my Impudence was soon chastised, being ordered to Sextons and Grave Diggers Lodge. Some Clerks meet with a better Reception, which is owing to a more decent Behaviour, which if you do not think fit to follow, you must suffer with your old Friend and Brother

A M E N.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R XX.

To a D. D.

WHAT you now are, I once was,
a zealous Friend of the Church.
Most of my Discourses were levelled against
Dissenters; by which I established a Re-
putation for Learning and Orthodoxy. But
I was here informed, that my Discourses
tended more to inflame than reconcile the
Differences subsisting amongst Christians,
and I had dwelt so much upon the De-
cency and Propriety of the Discipline of our
Church, as to have neglected the more
weighty and important Matters of the Gos-
pel. It would have proved of more Ad-
vantage to the Hearer, not less to Religion,
to have explained and recommended the
Duties of it, than encouraged a Pharisaical
Righteousness. The Controversy I had
solemnly engaged in, was against Vice and
Folly. The Conversion of one Soul from
the Error of his Ways, would have been
of real Service to my Master's Cause: But
to have bestowed Censures on certain Men
for a mere Difference in Opinion, or pay-
ing

ing little Regard to Things indifferent, was reckoned an Abuse of Time and Talents, as it gave an Advantage to Infidelity, and instead of Love and Harmony encouraged Variance and Discord amongst Mankind. For what I was rewarded in your World, in this I am to be punished. You well know what Detriment Civil Society has received from fomenting and cherishing those Divisions: So that what your Master said upon another Occasion, seems to be literally verified, that *he came not to send Peace upon the Earth, but a Sword*. Believe me, that enforcing the Practice of Virtue and Piety in an Age, when the Cause of Infidelity and Immorality daily gains ground, would be acting more consistent with the Character of a Gospel Minister, than to be gravely disputing the Preference of a black Gown to a black Cloak, of kneeling to sitting at the Sacrament, of making to omitting the Sign of the Cross, of praying by a written to a premeditated Form of Prayer, and such like Articles of great Importance, which administer no Comfort, no Consolation to the Hearer, and make him neither the wiser nor better Christian. As a Churchman I made great Merit in maintaining, and others esteemed it no less in
opposing

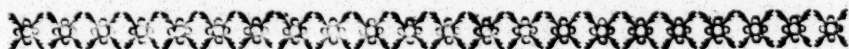
opposing the Opinions of the Church. But both I and they have Reason to repent of the Folly, since our Arrival in this Place. It was hardly credited here, that Men could have employed their Parts about such Trifles; that either the one or the other Opinion should have afforded Matter of Offence; and the admitting one or rejecting the other would entitle or seclude any from civil Offices and Employments. What our Punishment will be is not determined; for they are at a Loss to know what to inflict upon such strange Criminals: Though we are not without present Sufferings, since we who were accounted the wisest amongst Men when living, are now treated as mere old Women, and are the standing Jest of all the Inhabitants of these Parts. To be the Friend of Mother Church has been admitted as an Excuse for the greatest Crimes and Villainies; I need not instance to you in Particulars: From your Acquaintance with the World you can be no Stranger to the Riots, Drunkenness, &c. of which she has been made the Sanction. She may be of use to preserve a Reputation with you, but cannot excuse Guilt here. You would do well to acquaint your Flock of this, and let them

I know,

know, that those only are the true Friends of the Church who practise Religion most, and that their Esteem and Affection for it cannot be better shewn than by Temperance and Moderation. In complying with this Advice you will then in Reality be, what you are now only in Appearance, a true Minister of the Gospel.

Yours,

A CONTRAVERSIALIST.



LETTER XXI.

To the L—ds C—m——rs of the Ad——ty.

YOU will understand by this Letter, that we are well acquainted with the Affairs of your World; from whence we lately received this Piece of Intelligence, which surprized and astonished us. A Transaction so extraordinary from the Beginning to the End of it, that we have never known nor heard of its Parallel. The Conduct of Ad——l B—g is not difficult to be accounted for: But the Behaviour of some of the C—t M——l is strange, inconsistent and ridiculous. Why did they hesitate
upon

upon Evidence so clear, sensible and circumstantial? Why mistake or overlook Part of the Verdict, since Cowardice as well as Negligence was his Crime? Why those sudden, unexpected Qualms of Conscience after Sentence pronounced? Why solicitous to procure a Reprieve, when before they were unanimous in consenting to his Death? Was the twelfth Article absolute? It is false; they had a discretionary Power. If, as they pretend, he was only guilty of an Error in Judgment, why did they condemn, whom they might have acquitted? If the Article was certain Death to those, who should be found guilty of it, and his Crime did not subject him to it, they could not in Equity and Law have punished, but should have released him, notwithstanding the popular Odium and Displeasure which they might have incurred; to which no Man should pay any Regard, when it is wrongly founded. Why do they, or others, if not C——ds, and intend not to play the same base and inglorious Part, want a Repeal or Amendment of that Article? The truly brave never act from a Principle of Fear; they engage not as compelled by Laws, but from a real disinterested Love of their Country. Laws

were never made for the good, but the bad; to prevent Knaves and Cowards from usurping the Rewards due to Merit, and escaping the Punishment due to their Demerits. To avoid falling under the Article, let them do what is right, and they will have Praise, Honour and Reward for the same: But if they do that which is wrong, they may justly fear it, let Disgrace, Infamy and Death be their Portion. This is the Opinion of us, whose Names are under-written, formerly Admirals of Great-Britain. We are further of Opinion, that the Sentence of Death may be justly executed; for he appears to us to have been not only negligent but a Coward, as he might have assisted the Van, distressed the Enemy, and endeavoured to relieve or succour Minorca, but would not. Besides, has he given in any Plan, Scheme, or Design he had formed, to excuse his not bearing down to and engaging his Division? But he came, he saw, and when, like the great Julius, he might have conquered, he ingloriously retreated, rather fled from a flying Enemy. We are also of Opinion, that the Disgrace brought upon the British Navy would have been in some Measure removed by an immediate Execution of A—l B—g;
that

that his Respite was weak, as he had no Discoveries to make, he was too fond and anxious of Life to have concealed them; that the Weepers of the C—t M——l, those also who look upon the twelfth Article as too rigid and severe, or petitioned to have it considered, altered or amended, should be broke, and for ever rendered incapable of serving the Government in any capacity whatsoever; that the Lieutenants of Men of War and Commanders of Privateers, who have behaved gallantly, should be immediately preferred to their Commands; that the Articles of War should, if possible, be made more strict; the Terror indeed of the Coward, but the Pride of the Brave; and that whosoever is found guilty of Death, should be executed without Respect of Persons; and none other Respite allowed, but what may be judged necessary to prepare them for this World. That the ancient Honour and Glory of the British Flag may be retrieved, this infamous Stain be blotted out by the future Conduct and Bravery of your Naval Commanders, and that you Gentlemen may go on with the same Spirit, Vigour and Judgment you have hitherto discovered, and your Endeavours for the publick Good be always

crowned with Success, is the hearty and
sincere Wish of your Friends,

Admiral HOWARD,
——— DRAKE,
——— PENN,
——— BLAKE,
——— MONK,
——— BENBOW,
——— WAGER,
——— BALCHEN,
——— WARREN, &c. &c. &c.

From Paradise.

This Letter was received before A——
B——'s Execution.



LETTER XXII.

To a JUSTICE of PEACE.

S I R,

IT was my Misfortune to be born fair and
poor. The Circumstances of my Pa-
rents were low and mean. They had no
Time to give Instructions, and no Money
to spare to send me to School, the Family
being

being large *, and they busied in procuring our daily Subsistence. We were all employed as soon as able, and made useful and serviceable to each other; at the Age of seven we, in some Degree, earned the Bread we ate. Notwithstanding the hard Fare and coarse Diet, I lived happily under the thatched Roof, for I lived innocently. I was then insensible of my Beauty, and my Pride was only to finish my daily Task, to acquire the Esteem and Approbation of my Parents. What Pleasure, what Satisfaction did I then receive! But this Happiness did not long continue. A Gentleman of Fortune in the Neighbourhood had entertained a secret Passion for me. The better to gratify it, being at the Age of sixteen, he asked me of my Parents as an Assistant to his House-keeper. They readily and cheerfully complied, thinking it would be an Advantage to me, but principally as I should be taken off their Hands, and there would be one less in Family to provide for. From hence sprung the Misery, which I afterwards endured. My Master early discovered his Inclination, by taking more than ordinary Notice of me above the rest of the Servants, speaking kindly, and making little

* Nine Children.

Presents. I looked upon this to be the Effect of pure good Nature, and I used more than ordinary Care and Diligence in my Place, to render myself more agreeable; which did not extinguish, but increase the Flame. The House-keeper, whom he made his Confident, soon undeceived me, and it was not long before he acquainted me, that he loved. I was surpris'd, ashamed, confounded. He vowed, he swore that he was sincere; I answer'd not, but offer'd to retire; he drew me to him; neither my Confusion, Innocence, nor Simplicity could protect me from the Villain's Lust. He ask'd, I denied; he threaten'd, I trembled; he promis'd, I believ'd. When the Time drew near, that my Shame could be no longer conceal'd with Safety to his Character and Reputation, he removed me to Town, under the Tuition and Inspection of his Procuress the House-keeper. The Babe did not live to be acquainted with its infamous Birth, but died in the Month. My Master look'd upon this as a fortunate Turn, and thought himself relas'd from any further Obligation to take Care of and provide for the Mother; he therefore order'd the House-keeper to discharge me. But the base perfidious Wretch countermanded

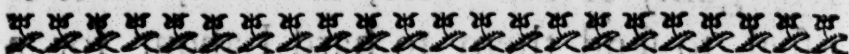
manded it; fearful of my returning Home, and exposing his Hypocrisy, as he passed in the Country for an honest, pious and civil Gentleman. Not content with spoiling me of my Virtue and Innocence, he made me miserable. One Evening he called a Coach, carried me to a Bagnio, and left me there sleeping. You cannot imagine how great my Surprize and Consternation, when I awaked to find him gone, and myself amongst Strangers. After a Week's Confinement, hard Treatment, and the Fear of a Jail, I complied with the Terms of the House. Though I entertained the best Company and received handsome Presents, yet I was always Debtor to my Keeper for Cloaths and Board. At the End of the Year my Beauty grew stale, and with two more young Girls I was turned out of Doors, to make Room for three new Faces. I then, as the Phrase is, came upon the Town, and commenced Street Walker. I shall pass over in Silence the various Scenes of Lewdness and Debauchery, in which I was concerned; which I now reflect upon with Horror, and sincerely repent of, but too late. What could I do? How could I quit the Paths of Vice? My Parents would
not

not receive me; my Friends and Relations disowned and shunned me; and though capable of Service, where, and of whom, could I have procured a Character, and without a Character who would have taken me into their House? Thus I was compelled to walk on, 'till Death, by an infamous Disease, put an End to a wretched Life. This is the distressed Condition of many of our Sex, which highly merits the Pity and Compassion of the Legislature, since our Baseness and Wickedness, is only to contribute to the enriching, those Agents of Hell, our Keepers. One Method to prevent many from following Ways so fatal and pernicious to their Virtue and their Ease, would be to punish those Keepers of disorderly Houses, with Transportation for Life; (a slight and trivial Punishment for the Crimes, which they are the Authors of, and the Distress and Misery they bring upon Thousands) that every House or Tavern Keeper, who entertains or harbours any such Persons, should, upon Conviction, be liable to an heavy Fine and Imprisonment, and upon Default of Payment, to be transported for a certain Number of Years; and to pass to their respective Parishes the Persons

sons guilty of this Vice, and not, as it is usual, to send them to hard Labour for a few Days, (which seldom cures, oftentimes hardens Offenders) and those only of the meanest Sort, who have no Lord to protect them, no Bully to fight their Cause. By this Method they would have Time and Opportunity of repenting, and be prevented from running that Length of Sin and Folly, as renders Repentance and Amendment of Life impracticable, and will unavoidably terminate in Infamy in your World, and Misery in this. Had these or some such Laws been in Force ten Years ago, many who are now to suffer Torments, would have been entitled to everlasting Happiness; which, Sir, would have been the Lot, amongst others, of the unfortunate.

KITTY FREELOVE.

LETTER



L E T T E R XXIII.

To the Reverend Mr. _____

WHEN living I was very fond of the Writings of the Fathers. Their speculative Notions and Modes of Worship and Discipline, I was hugely pleased with. I held nothing to be good, but what they approved; and I looked upon those, who opposed, contradicted, or did not admit their Authority, to be the Enemies of Christianity, and those who corrected the Errors of their Transcribers and Commentators, to have done considerable Service to Religion. As I admired their Sentiments, so I endeavoured to imitate their Manners. I was allowed to have been an inimitable Pattern of primitive Sanctity, Gravity, and Austerity, and I find that I am to this Day spoken of in your World, as a very great and good Man; but in this I make a different Appearance. I was called to an Account for a waste of Time, and for troubling Mankind with the Opinions of Men, as weak and fallible as their Interpreter. I was told, that notwithstanding the great Merit and
Reputa-

Reputation I had acquired, I had forgot, overlooked, or neglected one Part of primitive Christianity, Liberality. Upon which Account my Knowledge was looked upon as vain, my Piety counterfeited. As I had good Preferment in the Church and no Family, I was able to make a decent Provision for my Curate, and his four Children. I was asked in what Manner I had disposed of my six hundred a Year. To which I made this Reply; That I had spent much in making a curious and valuable Collection of the Fathers, Popish Writers, and controversial Divines; and I did not apprehend that I had bestowed my Money lavishly in purchasing, nor spent my Time foolishly in studying them, as it was a Duty incumbent upon a Minister of the Gospel, to prevent his Flock from falling into any dangerous Notions, either of Faith or Practice. To which I was answered, that with a Variety of Learning I had displayed little Judgment; that I had been very happy in transcribing, not inventing; that I had been so deeply read in Ignatius, Barnabas, Clemens, Chrysostom, &c. as to have neglected the Writings of the Apostles; that I had revived the Memory of Heresies long since buried in Oblivion; that I preached more
against

against the Abuses, than set forth the Uses of Christianity; that by this Means I had encouraged and promoted Hatred and Strife, rather than Peace and Harmony amongst Christians; I was in short told, that had I given the Value of a thousand useless and unnecessary Volumes to my Curate, I should have had more real Learning, and been much the better Priest; and my Hearers, who were plain simple Folk, would have been more acquainted with the Doctrines and Precepts of Christianity than Ecclesiastical History and Antiquity, which were of no Use or Benefit to them, either in Trade or Religion. Their Bible was enough for them to learn and understand, and it was my Duty to have expounded it to them; not to have concerned myself with other Mens Interpretation of Scripture, which might have more of Learning and Ingenuity, than Reason and Truth. You see, Sir, of what great Value the Fathers are here; their Authority is esteemed no better nor greater than your's or mine. Nothing passes in these Parts but what has the Sanction of Christ and his Apostles; whose Precepts and Instructions, you would do well publickly to recommend, and keep your Ancients for private Entertainment; with

with whom the Generality of Men have no Acquaintance, and therefore they are more fit to be confined to the Study or the Press, than to appear in the Pulpit.

Your's

A PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN.



L E T T E R XXIV.

To the Reverend Dr. ———

YOU may remember that I once consulted you concerning the Legality of accepting another Living. Your Answer was, that every Man was to do the best for himself; that it was not unlawful, unreasonable, nor unscriptural to possess two Livings. The great Opinion I had entertained of your Learning and Piety, together with your Example, determined me. Upon Enquiry I found the Practice to have been general, and I was the more easily reconciled to it. I principally resided upon my Living in Town, and the other, in Imitation of my Superiors, I supplied in the cheapest Manner. But alas! when I came here I soon found that I had been deceived; that
you

you had consulted well in Regard of Temporals, but my Profession had been slighted and neglected. I was convinced of this, when called upon to give an Account of my Trust, one Part of which I knew only by receiving the Tythes. I was so ashamed and confounded, that I knew not what to say, and would have gladly sneaked away with those, who were drawing off; upon whose Foreheads this Accusation was written, *these are the Men whose Godliness was Gain.* After they were gone, a Number of Men, Women and Children appeared. Upon enquiring who they were, I was furlily answered, your Parishioners. Immediately my Ears were stunned with Complaints and Upbraidings, that through my Neglect and Indifference they were miserable. From my Example, and the little Concern I shewed for their Spiritual Welfare, they thought that Religion was the Invention of Priests; that they were only obliged to observe its Precepts out of Decency; and that they might lawfully transgress them, whenever it suited, either with their Interest, Pleasure, or Convenience. Some of these Complaints were easily removed, being made by those who had an Understanding equal to my own, and were fully acquainted with
their

their Duty, and their Obligations to perform it. In Excuse for their Crimes they indeed pleaded my Non-Residence, but it proved ineffectual. But there were some, whose Absence I could have dispensed with, and whose Presence threw me into the greatest Agony; they were poor ignorant Wretches, who could not read, and therefore had none other Way of knowing their Duty, but from what they saw and heard. To my Account they placed their Misfortunes; to me, they said, were their Spiritual Concerns committed, concerning which I had never made any Enquiry. I faintly urged what you had before said, that it was not unscriptural. Instead of an Answer, I had the Gospel put into my Hands. In vain did I seek for the Words Pluralities and Non-Residence; but many were the Passages which occurred to me in turning over the Leaves, by which I was commanded *to feed, to teach, to instruct, to take Care of my Flock, &c.* It would have been ridiculous to have attempted a Defence of my Conduct from Law and Reason, since I was plainly condemned by Scripture; I therefore acknowledged my Error, and was for the present dismissed. You have now read my unhappy Case: The same will be yours, unless you em-

brace the present Opportunity of preventing it. Let no pecuniary Advantages prevail with you to sacrifice Duty to Interest, and be content with a decent Provision, for you will find one Parish to be sufficient, if you manage it properly. Your Family may be enriched by the Acquisition of another; but believe me, from Experience I speak, that by it you will make an indifferent Figure in this World.

Your's

A PLURALIST.



LETTER XXV.

To the Reverend Mr. ———

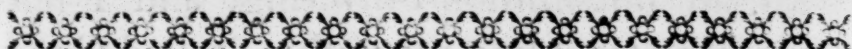
I WAS one of those mistaken and unhappy Persons, who thought that any one might take upon him the sacred Office, who by Interest or Services could procure a Title to a Living. My Relations, who were well acquainted with my Abilities, put me to what Nature had designed me for, a Trade. But I quickly grew weary of the
Re-

Restraint and Confinement, which Business required, and having an Interest in a great Family, I procured a Preferment in the Church.. As I had been taught to read well, I found no Difficulty in performing that Part of my Office; and though I could not compose, yet Sermons, you know, are to be had at an easy Expence. To satisfy the scrupulous and doubtful, I had recourse to learned Commentators and controversial Divines, never relying upon or giving my own Judgement, from a Consciousness of my Inability. By this Artifice my Ignorance was termed Modesty. I never entered into Disputes and Controversies, and always avoided or waved Religious Topicks. I was a merry Companion, present at all Entertainments, and usually dined with the 'Squire on Sundays. I passed my Time very comfortably and pleasantly, and was accounted a good natured honest Fellow, though not a great Divine. No sooner had I departed, but I found my Mirth and Pleasantry to have been introductory to much Sorrow; and I had Reason to repent of intruding into an Office, for which I knew my Incapacity, and to which I had no just and legal Pretension. I thought it not criminal, as Religion was looked upon as a

Trade, to leave a worse to follow a better Profession. I was somewhat the better for it in the other World, but am considerably the worse for it in this. Though you, Sir, with many others, make a Jest of this, you will find it to be a serious Matter, and meet with severe Discipline here, not only from an Abuse of Talents, but for exposing Religion to Contempt; for though any one may be made, yet it is not every one so made who is a Parson. Upon my Arrival here I met with several Brothers of the Trade, who died before I had entered into Orders. From their Testimony and the odd Appearance I made, it was doubted, whether or no I had been ordained. In all Probability I should have been tried for an Impostor, had not an Inn-Keeper, who died of a Surfeit at an Election Dinner, accidentally came in and testified, that being Rector of the Parish, I had said Grace. This Discovery proved of little Use; for being asked, what Inducement I had to commence a Priest, I readily answered (not imagining that would be reckoned a Sin, which is generally approved of in the other World) *the Love of Money*. The Words were no sooner uttered, but I was seized with

with an uncommon Shivering, and I felt something troubling me within, called Conscience, with which I used to frighten the Weak and Ignorant, and never knew till now, that it had a real Existence. Sentence was going to be pronounced, but from a Consciousness of Guilt I retired, and acknowledge the Punishment I am to suffer to be just. You see, Sir, what you and others are to expect, who have stolen into the Church. As the Profits received in it are considerable, I am persuaded that you will not relinquish them. A constant Attendance upon your Trust, and a faithful Discharge of it, will atone for your Crime, and prevent you hereafter from having any Share in the Misfortunes of several reverend Excisemen, Fiddlers, Bookfellers, Cobblers, &c.

Your well Wisher.



L E T T E R XXVI.

To the Reverend Dr. ———

AS soon as I had left the Body I found myself on the Banks of a River, surrounded with a great Number of departed Spirits; who after they had viewed me, sighed and shook their Heads. As I walked along and wondered at the strange Appearance, being sad and pensive, and musing with myself concerning my Fate, I was agreeably roused from the melancholy Fit, by such delightful and ravishing Harmony, as I had never before heard. What greatly surprised me was, that the Spirits about me immediately disappeared. Upon turning about I discovered a small Boat. As it drew towards the Shore a Trumpet sounded, and forthwith about an hundred Ghosts of pleasant and chearful Countenance appeared, conducted by a venerable old Man. I mixed with the Company and got safe on board; but the Pilot quickly discerning that I was of a different Shape and Figure from the rest of the Passengers, said, *Friend, thou hast no Place here.* Immediately I found myself
self

self on Shore, the Boat and Passengers gone, and the old Man by my Side. These Things, said he, do appear strange to you, who are lately arrived. The Vessel you saw came from Paradise; the Times of its coming in are quarterly, to convey the good Souls to that happy Place; the Number of those who went you know. I here interrupted him by saying, No more than one hundred out of the many thousands of different Nations, who have died in that Time! Why should you be surprized, quoth he; the Scriptures say but few are to be saved. He went on, The Spirits who disappeared upon the Sight of the Vessel, are those who are doomed to suffer; the Appearance of the Boat was the Occasion of their retiring, as it reminded them of their past Follies, and the Deprivation and Loss of that Bliss and Happiness which blessed Spirits enjoy. Thus discoursing I observed a Paper in his Hand; the Contents of it he was so kind as to read. The Part which will affect you is as follows, “ Ordered, amongst other Per-

“ sons, that no Clergyman shall be suffered
“ to escape unpunished, who appears to
“ have been guilt of Simony; the buying
“ and selling any Living; the procuring
“ Preferment by voting at Elections; by

“ making Presents to a Lord’s Lady, Steward,
“ or any other Person, by whose Interest or
“ Influence any Living may be obtained,
“ to be looked upon and deemed within
“ the Act.” I send you this early Notice to
prevent in you the Sufferings which I shall
soon undergo. I thought it no Crime to
have purchased a Living of two hundred a
Year, for seven hundred Pounds; and many
others are of the same Opinion, if I may
judge from the frequent Sale and Purchase
of Livings in Reversion. What impious
Prayers are offered up to Heaven, by the
Purchaser, to hasten the Death of the old
Incumbent! With what Pleasure is the glad
News received when dead! What is a
Sorrow to others, the Loss of a good Man,
affords Matter of Joy and Consolation to
the brutal Successor, whose Merit and
Abilities might never have raised him from
the lowest and meanest Station in the
Church. His Lordship will find it more
for his Interest hereafter to discharge his
Debts of Honour, and expensive Frolicks
by other Methods, and the Parson will find
it not less beneficial to refuse the Purchase.
The Order in full will be sent by the next
Packet, with the Debates of the Council
upon it. They are now engaged in re-exa-
mining

mining Simon Magus, that all Pretences, Excuses, Evasions, Equivocations, &c. may be prevented. After his Trial the Punishment to be inflicted upon those, who have been, or shall be guilty of that infamous Practice, will be published.

Your's

A SIMONIAN.



L E T T E R XXVII.

To an Assistant C U R A T E.

YOUR Distress was, I remember, great; which I find to be greater, by the Increase of your Family, and the Loss you received at my Death. Your Abilities, now buried in Obscurity, through the Want of Friends to encourage, and Opportunities to display them, will not be without a proper Reward here. Your Appearance is indeed mean and contemptible, and your Want of Preferment and extreme Poverty, have been hardly judged of; on Account of which you have been charged with Crimes of which you are innocent, more innocent than your base Accusers, and the Authors of your Misery and Distress. Those who are better
read

read in human Nature know, that your Disorders proceed not from an Excess *in any Thing*, but from the Want *of every Thing*. You are not afflicted with the Gout, Fever or an Inflammation: But your continual Fastings, occasioned by an absolute Necessity, not as Matter of Duty or Choice, and an hungry Meal at best, with the dismal and affecting Sight of your starved and helpless Offspring, and the little Prospect of doing any Thing for them, or bequeathing them (what whilst living you with Difficulty procure) a necessary Subsistence, are the real, not pretended, Causes of what you feel and Suffer. You need no Exhortations to be patient in Adversity, for you have learnt that Virtue from Experience. It must be a Concern to leave your Family destitute; but let it not be a Trouble and Uneasiness upon your Mind, since it is not your Fault but Misfortune, that you can make no better Provision for them. To the Care of an all-wise and good God commit them. Teach them that the best Remedy for the Calamities of Life is to bear them, according to your Example, with Patience and Resignation: A few Years will put an End to your and their Troubles. Some Men have their Pleasures in your World, and
others

others their Sorrows; in this the latter are comforted, and the former tormented. Riches and Honour few enjoy, and for the Uses they are put to, it is well that they are so confined. The Proprietors should not have a Regard to self alone, but be ready and willing at all Times to relieve the Wants of the Poor, whose Guardians they are: By expending Part of their Fortunes in this Manner, they purchase to themselves an everlasting Estate in Reversion. Several Spirits lately met together, and discoursing about the Hardships of the inferior Clergy, we wondered that no Way had been found out to remove what were so generally known, and so generally complained of. It was said that the Superior Clergy were too powerful; many of them were the younger Sons of great Families, for whom there was none other Provision than the Church or Army afforded: Some others had obtained Preferment by Services; and others had too much Interest and Influence to be disobliged, by a Confinement to a single Living, or compelled to give more than they should chuse. If the Civil Power could not apply a Remedy, Application, it was said, should be made to the Ecclesiastical. But there are
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so many Connections, Obligations and Friendships, that those in Authority cannot exercise it. All the Answer that could be expected from them was, that every Man should make the best Bargain he can for himself. There were other Schemes proposed, but not one appeared practicable. After much Debate it was gravely said, that they (that is the Curates) would never have more, unless they would be content to have less. The Proposal seemed to be odd, but if complied with, Pluralities would be destroyed, or a more decent Provision made for Inferiors. The Meaning of it is, that the Curates should unanimously agree, unless a Salary was given in Proportion to the Duty and Value of the Living, or the Fortune of the Incumbent, to leave at the same Instant of Time their Curacies. To this Scheme it was objected, that it could not be generally complied with, on account of the present Poverty and Distress of many, and others for want of Subsistence would soon be compelled to re-accept. To which it was judiciously answered, that as most of the superior Clergy were possessed of Pluralities, and the Livings at such a Distance that they could not personally discharge the Duties of both, they must be reduced to the
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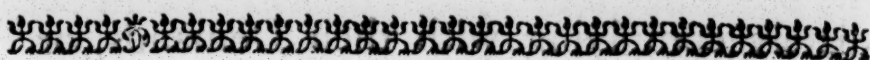
disagreeable Alternative either of immediately complying with their Demands, or resigning up one of the Livings. As the Scheme pleased us, I was desired to communicate it to you, and we heartily wish, as it is useful and expedient, and cannot be deemed illegal and unreasonable, it may be soon put into Execution. It is hoped, that no one through Fear, or for the Sake of a few trifling Perquisites, will stand out or appear as Neuters. This, at present, is the best Remedy for your Grievances; if any other should appear, you may expect to have it by the next Packet.

Yours,

From Paradise.

A RECTOR.

LETTER



L E T T E R XXVIII.

To a FATHER.

Honoured Sir,

THE Hopes you had so long entertained, and the Prayers you had so frequently offered up for an Heir, who might inherit the Estate and Virtues of your Ancestors, were, you thought, heard and gratified at my Birth. The Joy and Satisfaction then received were quickly succeeded by anxious Cares and Fears for your darling, but sickly Offspring. Nothing was wanting which the Affection of the most tender Parents could procure to administer Strength to the feeble and weak Constitution. But, alas! all Endeavours to save proved vain. To your inexpressible Grief and Sorrow, I died in my twentieth Year of a Consumption, after having flattered you so long with the Conceit of a Recovery. The Cause of it you are a Stranger to, and you will be surpris'd to hear that the Seeds of this Disease were sown in my Infancy; owing to the Neglect of one, whom you highly esteem and value. I know that you will ask, how this could have been; that

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one who had shewed so much Care of me when living, expressed so much Sorrow when dead, and still laments and bewails the Loss, should have been the unhappy Author of this Misfortune to your Family. The Cause was the Observance of a certain Delicacy of Taste, Humour, or Fashion prevailing amongst Ladies of high Birth and great Fortunes, and imitated by those of inferior Rank and Condition, of deserting or exposing their Children as soon as born. They are too tender, too weak, too nice, too squeamish, too idle or too much devoted to Pleasure, to become Nurses, and therefore send them to such, who have none other Affection for them than what arises from Interest; with whom the little helpless Innocents are pinched with Hunger, and frequently contract such bad Habits of Body and Mind, as render their Lives unhappy and uncomfortable to themselves, a Trouble and Uneasiness to their Friends and Relations. Has Providence been kind to all other Animals, in supplying them with Means and Strength to nourish their Young, and denied them to the most noble and fairest Piece of its Workmanship? Shall Brutes teach the Fair to have a natural Affection for their Offspring, in
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the tender Care and concern they shew for the Preservation of their own Species? Cannot they sacrifice one Year's Dress and Gaiety for the good of Infants (for whom they lately suffered so much) when the Interest, Honour and Happiness of their Families depend upon their Safety. What Satisfaction will Balls, Plays, and Visits yield comparable to this? Can any Pleasure, any Diversion be so innocent and entertaining, which every fond Mother daily and hourly receives from the endearing Looks, Tricks and prattling Noise of their little Offspring? It is unknown how many ancient and worthy Families have been deprived of Heirs by this cruel and unnatural Practice; how numerous those who, escaping my Fate, have lived, not to be an Honour and Ornament, but an Infamy and Disgrace to their Parents. It may happen, that these Effects are not produced, but they are seldom avoided, since the Circumstances of the Persons made choice of for those Purposes are mean; they are full of Care and Trouble how to provide for their own, have angry and cholerick Husbands to please and humour, and are (few, if any, excepted) addicted to the pernicious Custom of Dram-drinking. How is the
flow

flow but sure Poison infused by Means, which the God of Nature designed to communicate Health and Strength to the tender Infant. How are spirituous Liquors given to remove Disorders (rather to excuse the Love of Drinking) for which Providence has furnished plain, easy and simple Medicines ! Hence the many various Diseases with which they are frequently affected from the State of Infancy to that of Youth ; for which, few Remedies are found, few Cures made, as the great Number of those who die under that Age shew. The Skill of the Physician is baffled, and the Application of Drugs rendered useless by Ailments unnatural, whose only Relief is in Death. You would be astonished to see the Number of Infants continually arriving in these Parts, who having scarce breathed Existence, through the Unkindness of the Parent, and the Intemperance of the Nurse, have been so early deprived of Life : The Parents also not a little contributing thereto, by their frequent Use of Spirits and strong Waters. From whence, as I have often heard you say, the weak and puny Offspring, and the Difference of the present from the last Age in Health, Strength and Stature. You did not then

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think

think, that to this Vice was the Death of your Son owing, with many others, who had promised the same Happiness to their Parents. The same Fate attends many more now living, and will be of many others yet unborn, till Mothers follow Nature and rear their own Offspring, or if, as it sometimes, but rarely happens, that they are not able, let them seek for and procure sober and temperate Nurses. But Infants and Youth are not the only Persons who fall a Sacrifice to this Vice ; ninety out of a hundred of Adults are killed by it. This will not surprise, if you enquire into the vast Consumption of strong and spirituous Liquors ; if you reckon up the Number of Taverns, public and licensed Houses in the great Metropolis, and neighbouring City and Borough, where Liquors are sold ; the many Guests each has, notwithstanding they are numerous ; and the large and easy Fortunes both Brewers and Distillers, Seller and Retailer soon acquire. Please to communicate this Letter to my Sisters, who may by it be persuaded to lay aside the fashionable, and become the natural Mother. The Public, I think, should likewise be acquainted with it, as it may be instrumental in preserving many a noble Heir, and saving Thousands of Infants from an untimely

untimely End, who would be an Ornament and Strength to Society. This, Sir, we of this Place know to be true. Many a noble Peer, an honest Statesman, an uncorrupt Judge, a pious Divine, a brave Soldier, a sober Citizen, an industrious Artizan, &c. have been destroyed in their Infancy; which you are sensible must be a great and affecting Loss to Society, as there are but few, very few such now living; and I believe they have been in all Ages very scarce, since this Place is not crowded with them.

From Paradise.

Your affectionate Son.



LETTER XXIX.

To the Rev. Mr. ———.

THE Preferment I had in the Church was considerable. This singular Favour of Providence I entirely appropriated to the Indulgence of Self. I urged the Practice of Beneficence to all, but never administered to the Wants and Necessities of any. There was no Delicacy, which I

did not procure and regale myself and boon Companions with; being a Batchelor and having no Relations, I thought that I might be thus innocently free. I did not confider, that as I was able, it was my Duty to have relieved and assisted the Indigent and Neceffitous, not revelled in Luxury and riotous Living, when many of my Flock were in Distress and Misery; whose Lives, by a little Abstinence, I could have made easy and comfortable. I should have met with a better Reception in this World, if, instead of entertaining my rich Friends, I had followed the Advice of my Master, and called in the Poor, who could not have returned the Favour: And, in all Probability, the spending Part of my Income in this Manner would have prolonged my Life, as it would have prevented many Riots and much Excess; since the frequent Invitations of Friends not only shortened my Days, but were the real Cause of my Death. Good Fellowship passed very well in the other World as an Excuse for Intemperance; but there is no palliating Vice here. Men appear what they really were, and your merry Souls are treated as mere Drunkards. You may remember that I was suddenly dispatched by a Surfeit at Guildhall,

Guildhall, and I was scarcely recovered from it, when I entered this Place. The next Day, being Sunday, I was ordered to prepare for Trial. As I had many Infirmities, Lowness of Spirits, Fevers, Gout, &c. it was asked, whether these Disorders were occasioned by a close Attendance upon the Office of a Minister? You well know it to be the Reverse; I, therefore, made no Reply. I was then asked, whether I had never neglected any Duty for the Sake of Pleasure, Company or Entertainment? To this Question I was going to reply, when I heard, as it were, a Bell tolling for Morning Prayers, which brought to my Mind the several Omissions made for Head-aches got over Night; a Child came in, who had died unbaptized, I was that Morning a Fox-hunting; two Women appeared, who had departed without the Sacrament, at which Time I was solliciting a great Man for another Living; a young Woman approached, who was to be married the Morning I was seized with the Gout, after having drank nobly of French Claret, the Bridegroom, who was a Sailor, being pressed the next Day; several poor Wretches, half naked and starved, with a Number of little Children hanging about them, followed.

I soon found that my rigorous Exaction of Tythes and Fees, occasioned by sensual Gratifications, had brought this Distress upon them. I acknowledged my Guilt, and retired. What Effect this Letter may have upon you, I know not; but be assured of this, that all the Mirth and Jollity, the splendid and elegant Entertainments, which I have been Partaker of, are not equivalent to one Day's Suffering.

From yours,

T. G.



LETTER XXX.

To the Rev. Mr. ———.

BEFORE I obtained any Preferment in the Church, you know how modest and humble I appeared. I then thought, like an honest Man, that Pluralities were illegal; and that every one ought to resign a lesser when a greater Preferment was obtained. But our Sentiments alter with our Circumstances; and what was before unreasonable, I afterward judged to be convenient.

venient. I then despised Wealth, because I had it not, and railed against Pluralists, because they possessed what I wanted to enjoy. When a Living of three hundred was given me, I had a Lectureship of fifty. Before I would have gladly relinquished the one for the other; and I then thought it criminal in some Persons to hold such Trifles, after the same or better Acquisitions. When I left the inferior Order, I found the Practice general; and I too readily came into it. I had the Examples of great and learned Divines before me. It was thought that a rich Parson, near T— B—r, upon having a few Hundreds added to what he before possessed, would have resigned a trifling Lectureship: But when asked, his Answer was, *he was greatly surprised to hear of such a Report, having no such Intention.* Another Divine, I find, still continues to be terribly hipped, for having refused a Preferment, which his old Age and Infirmities made him to fear, that he should not live long enough to receive Profits sufficient to defray the usual Expence attending it. These are looked upon as Men of Merit; but in their Passage from the other World to this, it will be lost: I speak from the best Au-

thority, Experience. I was asked, if I did not think the Living I had, before it was procured, to have been a sufficient Maintenance, exclusive of Lectureship? I could not deny it. I was then asked, why, upon obtaining the former, I did not give up the latter? To which I had the common Answer ready, that I was obliged to make a different Appearance; and therefore wanted it. But this Kind of pleading availed nothing. I was told, that I had secluded a more deserving Man from a comfortable Subsistence, meerly to support my Pride and Vanity; that I had compelled him, for the Sake of a Dinner, or the Fear of disobliging, to sacrifice his Character to the Mirth of Fools; and that I had exercised the same Inhumanity and Injustice, which, when in Want and Necessity, I had so frequently censured and condemned others for. I urged in Excuse, that Curates, when they should become Rectors and Vicars, would do the same Thing. It was replied, that though Complaints from such Persons might be unjust, yet the Plea would not serve; for the Guilt and Punishment of Sin would not be less, because its Votaries are numerous; that I was not to
have

have considered what others would do, but what I ought to have done. I send you this Advice, that you may acquaint those Rectors, who hold Curacies or Lectureships, or are constantly applying and soliciting for Gift Sermons, that it is their Duty now, as it will be their Reward hereafter, to leave those Places and Trifles for the present Relief and Support of their necessitous and indigent Brethren and Families. Whether they will follow the Advice, I know not; but of this Truth they may be satisfied, of which a little Time will sensibly convince them, that the more moderate their Desires, the lighter their Punishment will be here.

Yours, &c.

T. R.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R XXXI.

To a young Lady of FASHION.

My Dear,

WHAT I wrote to you on my Death-Bed, I have now experienced to be true. You attributed the prudent Advice I then gave, and the Sorrow I expressed for the past Gaieties and Pleasures of Life, to my Disorder and Lowness of Spirits; and was pleased to say, that I was rather serious and religious from Necessity than Choice. You had just Reason indeed to suspect my Sincerity, since the Esteem I had before shewed for Religion was merely formal, and my Devotions had been performed from a Regard to Decency, not from a Sense of Duty. You are now in the Bloom and Beauty of Youth; it may be difficult, therefore, to persuade you to be serious. But the Time will come, when you cannot amuse, divert, nor stifle Reflection. At the last solemn Hour, when standing on the Borders of Eternity, when all human Relief fails, the Application of Medicines

useless

useless, and the Skill of the Physician vain, what Comfort, what Consolation will the Remembrance of Balls, Plays, Concerts, Operas, Masquerades, Routs, &c. yield in your Affliction and Distress! How faint and languid will be your Hopes of Happiness; how powerful and alarming, yet how true and just your Fears of Misery! You will then apply for Ease to Religion; but, alas! what Ease can it afford to one, who has both in public and private treated it with Indifference and Contempt, and frequently used it as a Sanction to Witticisms and Buffoonery. What Rest to your troubled Conscience can you expect from a God, whose Sabbath you have so often violated and prophaned by Routs, Gaming, &c. How will you then wish, but wish in vain, for the Return of that Time so profusely lavished away in Dress, to procure the Esteem and Respect of those, whose Pity or Contempt you will soon be, as Age comes on, and new Beauties arise. Why should you postpone these Considerations, 'till they they can be of no Use? Why should you put off the Practice of what you will then highly approve, and condemn yourself for neglecting? Why should you think of being religious, when you can receive no
Benefit

Benefit from such Behaviour? I have often heard you say, that Religion is fit only for old Men and Women, who have no Taste left, to whom Pleasure is insipid, and Company disagreeable. Do you really believe, that Religion makes its Professors dull, melancholy and unsociable? Practise it, and you will experience the Falshood. It permits every Pleasure that is innocent; it only prohibits such as are injurious to the Constitution, and unworthy of a rational Being; it is no Enemy to Mirth and Humour, which is founded on good Sense, and does not offend Morality: So far from instilling Dullness and Melancholy, that the truly religious, is the only happy and chearful Person. The Performance of Duty leaves no Upbraidings, no Uneasiness upon the Mind, nothing to be repented of; but the Neglect of it does, and will be the Occasion, sooner or later, of much Grief and Sorrow. Believe me, if religious, you would not be so much troubled with the Vapours, nor so often complain of the Tedioufness of Time, when you have no Rout to make, no Visit to return, and no Pleasure to take: You would no longer call the Sabbath an idle and uselefs Day, nor sigh and grieve for the Suspension
of

of the publick Diversions; you would quit your Toilet to contemplate the amazing and stupendous Instances of the Power, the Wisdom and Goodness of God in his various Dispensations; you would give up the Pleasures of a Ball, a Play and Opera, for such truly excellent and rational Entertainment; you would sacrifice an Head Dress to the Relief of an honest but necessitous Family, and forsake the false Enjoyments of your, to secure the Joys of the next World. I know, my Dear, all this will be called preaching: But remember that it is preaching from the Dead; not by those whose Profession and Bread it is, as we used to term it. I can have no other Motive than your good, to prevent your Suffering what I am to endure. Forbear making a Jest of Things sacred, and so live, that let Death visit you early or late, suddenly or not, it may find you innocent. This is the sincere Wish of the dear but unfortunate,

KITTY MODISH.

L E T T E R



L E T T E R XXXII.

Dear Friend,

YOU are no Stranger to the Misfortunes, which happened to me in the other World; you knew, pitied, but could not remove them. The Cause was my unhappy Choice in a Wife. After the Death of the good old Woman my Mother, I courted what is called an accomplished Person. Being in a large Way of Business, and worth Money, Consent was soon obtained, and I was married. What Felicity did I then expect; and I began to reproach myself, that I had remained so long single. But alas! the promised Felicity soon vanished; a few Weeks shewed the Error, and Thought and Reflection came, but came too late. I was sensibly convinced, that I had been amused into Ruin by Externals; and mere Shew and Appearance had passed for real Worth and good Sense. Her Gaiety, her Taste and fine Accomplishments, brought on a Loss of Credit, and a Bankruptcy quickly followed. No sooner had I
taken

taken her Home, but I saw my Weakness and Folly. As an ancient Citizen I desired her to take the Care and Management of the domestick Affairs: She turned from me with an Air and said, that *she did not marry to be my Housekeeper or Cook Maid*. A Month before her Travail I asked her, which Room she designed for her Nursery. A *Nursery!* she cried: *O! the Brute*, and fainted. When recovered, addressing herself to Mrs. Midnight, *Madam*, said she, *my Mother, who had fifteen Children, never nursed nor dressed one; and she had a much less Fortune than myself. What an intolerable Thing it is to be wedded to a low Life vulgar Fellow; and fainted again*. One Time I bid her little Master (for you must understand, that she never called the Children mine) to fetch some Fuel for the Fire: *Fetch it yourself*, Booby, said she; *would you spoil the Child's Hand, and make him as great a Clown as yourself?* In short, I never said or did any thing she liked; we were a Trouble and Uneasiness to each other, always dissatisfied, and never better pleased than when out of Sight. My Substance being in a few Years lavished away in Balls, Concerts, Plays, Operas, Visits, Dress, Equipage, &c. we parted both by Necessity and Choice, being

ing sufficiently tired with each other's Company. She went home to her Father's, and I was soon sent to Goal, where I survived my Misfortunes but a few Days. Had a prudent and discreet Woman fallen to my Lot, her Carefulness and Oeconomy would have improved my Fortune; or, if by any Accidents, to which Trade is exposed, I had been reduced, her innate Goodness, her Piety would have soothed and softened my Troubles, enabled me to have borne them with a becoming Decency and Resolution, and made me happy in the Enjoyment of the little I should have had left. But the other was only made to bask in the Sunshine of Prosperity; and when the black Cloud of Adversity hung over my Head, was full of Complaints and Murmurings, not to say, Upbraidings. This ungenerous Return now appears to have been rather her Misfortune, than Fault; the Effect of the Parents Folly and Weakness in an improper Education. What has a Citizen's Daughter, whose Portion is small, and whose future Subsistence is to be drawn from Labour and Industry, to do with the Education of an Heiress? Yet Miss must be taught the French Tongue, to sing, to dance, to play upon Instruments of Musick, to receive Company,

Company, to have her visiting Days, Routs and Card-Tables; to follow the various Modes and Fashions of Dress; to be every Thing that a Woman of Quality is, without a Fortune or Purse to support it. What less than the Estate of a Duke can maintain this Taste and Politeness? How then can the Poverty, Fraud, Dishonesty and Bankruptcies, you frequently see and hear of, surprise? Nor need it appear strange, that amongst other base and illegal Practices, Prostitution should so much prevail, which is followed to uphold the genteel and fashionable Breeding, which the Parent gave, but could not maintain. What Misery would have been prevented, what Happiness enjoyed, if their Education had been agreeable to their Fortunes, and the Station of Life they were by Providence undoubtedly designed to fill! Then you would not see the Daughters of little Tradesmen putting on and assuming the Air and State of a Dutches, but shewing the Fondness of a Mother in nursing their own Offspring, and the Prudence of a Wife in managing and conducting the Family Affairs with Oeconomy and Frugality. Then the Industrious would not be defrauded of their Right and Property, to support their Extravagance;

162 LETTERS *lately received*, &c.

nor an innocent Offspring exposed to Poverty and Want, to maintain their Gaiety and Pleasure; nor themselves reduced to Beggary, or compelled to procure Subsistence by Violence and Dishonesty.

From Paradise.

Yours,

An unfortunate CIT.



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REMARKS

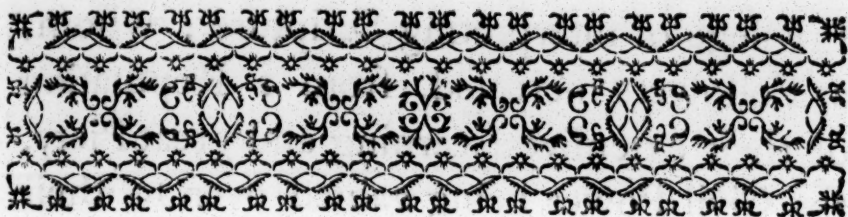
R E M A R K S

ON THE

AUTHORITY, &c.





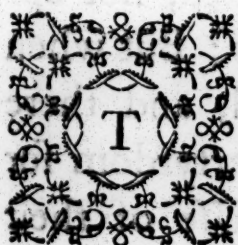


R E M A R K S

O N T H E

A U T H O R I T Y

Which the Church of ENGLAND claims in
her ARTICLES and CANONS.



THE Disputes and Controversies which are in the Church, concerning Matters of Faith and Discipline, have been the Concern of all good and pious Men. The Mischiefs which they have produced, and will still produce, if continued and encouraged, should incline and dispose us to think with Temper and Sobriety, and endeavour to compose and settle them. The original Cause of them

seems to have been the Vanity of learned Men, who claimed to themselves the sole Privilege of interpreting Scripture ; whom, as Followers increased, from a Reputation of their extensive Learning and great Piety, the Civil Power being gained over to their Side, others were obliged to follow, or suffer for the Refusal.

This was not less the Practice of other Churches than of Rome, before it was corrupted : And has it not been imitated by the Reformed ? They complained against the arbitrary and illegal Impositions of the Papal See, and their Complaints were just ; but was not Obedience to their Principles exacted with Rigour and Severity ? The People, to shew their Resentment against Popery, at first readily submitted, not apprehensive of the Consequences : But when the Dread of Popery subsided, and there was no Danger of suffering Martyrdom for Heresy, they began to make Use of their Freedom and Liberty. Upon Examination, they found that they had exchanged the Traditions for (what they termed) the Impositions of Men : So that, from thinking they could not be sufficiently guarded against the Corruptions and Abuses of Rome, Protestants

testants were unhappily divided amongst themselves.

The principal Cause of our Dissentions was an Abhorrence of Popery; which naturally produced a Dislike for any Rite, Ceremony, or Form of Discipline, that had been used in, or adopted by that Church. It must be acknowledged, that Zeal got the better of Reason and Discretion; for Things abused, when purged from their Abuses, may be innocently complied with. Notwithstanding, the Error seems to be pardonable, when we consider the Slavery, Tyranny and Oppression, which the Christian World had long suffered from the See of Rome. They thought (and did they think unreasonably?) that Men should not be denied the Benefits of Church Communion or the Privileges of a Subject, be anathematized or excommunicated, for entertaining different Sentiments of some Things, if useful and good, which could lay Claim to none other Authority, than what was founded on fallible Interpretations of the sacred Writings. Without derogating from the Learning and Abilities of the Imposers, may they not have been mistaken? though the Manner in which Subscription is demanded, and the Censures inflicted upon

those who refuse, seem to favour of Infallibility.

A false Discipline and Mode of Worship may be established by Misrepresentations and injudicious Determinations of Scripture. This is true of the Church of Rome; to whom Obedience has been paid and secured, from a Fear of incurring Civil Punishments, and by prohibiting and forbidding any Doubts, Disputes or Controversies concerning the Resolutions and Decrees of the Church. It is no Wonder, therefore, that the Errors and Absurdities propagated were embraced, when free Enquiry was prohibited, and Men were compelled to think and speak as Mother Church directed. Hence Things indifferent were made obligatory upon Conscience, and Christianity became the Sanction of impious Doctrines and ridiculous Traditions.

That the Church cannot err, is a slavish Maxim, and derogates much from the Credit and Veracity of the sacred Writings, since it puts human Weakness and Imperfection upon an Equality with divine Truth. Is it Christian Liberty to yield Assent, without enquiring, whether the Thing required to be believed or received, is worthy of Belief or Reception? He may be deemed a
Friend

Friend of the Church, who thus gives up his Understanding; and he may be accounted its Enemy, who does not; but certainly he is not the better Man, for neglecting the Use of those Powers, which the Author of Nature hath implanted in him, nor the better Christian for not examining into the Fitness and Propriety of human Prescriptions and Decisions, when it is expressly required as Part of his Duty. In respect of Temporal Interest, it may be imprudent to make the Enquiry.

Is not Subscription required at a Time, when Men have little or no Acquaintance with the controversial Writings of either Party? Can it then be supposed, that they rightly understand what they set their Hands to? Though, if they read the Articles, &c. yet they dare not make use of their Reason and Understanding; since, according to the Preamble before them, they must receive and acknowledge them to be true. I do not insinuate, that they are false and erroneous; but as much hath been, and may be said on both Sides, I think, with Submission, that as Ecclesiastical Laws should be conformable to Reason and Scripture, so they should be supported by the same Powers, not by inflicting Censures or Punishments

ments upon those, who only differ in Opinion, but are, in all other Respects, good Men and good Christians. Such Treatment belongs to another State and another Judge, who best, and indeed only knows, who is right and wrong, who, it is probable, may not concern himself with, nor punish either Party for mere Opinions.

But are Articles and Canons of no Use? They are: I am not pleading for an Abolition. But Christians would be more easily united, if the damnatory and excommunicatory Clauses were omitted; nor would Men be scrupulous in subscribing, if they were permitted to understand them in their own Sense. No unreasonable Request, for they contain many Points, that have been for many Centuries, and may remain to the last Period of Time, undetermined.

Is a Synod, or Convocation of English Divines, more holy and pious, less liable to Error and Deception, than general Councils were in ancient Times? Can it be affirmed, that they were under the peculiar Guidance and Direction of the Holy Spirit? Alas! the Disputes and Animosities, which prevailed both within and without Doors, will convince the candid and unprejudiced Enquirer after Truth of the Reverse: That
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the Weakness and Frailty of Man too much prevailed over the Meekness and Gentleness of the Spirit. The Compilers of the Articles seem to be of the same Opinion, not only in allowing, that they were liable to Error, but that in some Things they had been mistaken. That a Convocation of English Divines is more infallible, is not to be granted, unless it can be proved, that they had more of Inspiration.

It may be said, does it not appear to be reasonable and just, that the Holy Spirit should assist, where the Honour and Interest of Christianity are so highly concerned; when Rules for the Government and Discipline of the Church are to be made, and the Substance of the Christian Faith is to be explained? For the latter, the Assistance of the Holy Spirit is not wanted, it being plainly delivered in the Scriptures: And if Men had been content with Citations from it, and laboured less in their Comments upon it, Christians would, in Matters of Faith, have been more united, and their Understandings less disturbed: For there could have been no reasonable Plea against Union. All Men may be brought to believe in Doctrines plainly revealed and set forth in the Scriptures, but never will acknowledge

knowledge human Expositions arbitrarily imposed by Persons, who cannot pretend to a superior Degree of Merit, either of Piety, Learning or Ability.

Church Government and Discipline should be so ordered, as to comprehend all Protestants, and be offensive, if it was possible, to none ; but Excommunications for rejecting Things allowed and acknowledged to be indifferent, should be avoided and omitted. It may be said, that the Rites and Ceremonies are few, decent and becoming: But do they not appear to be more than should be ? if not, from whence spring these Dissentions and Divisions amongst Protestants ? Think not that they proceed from a Love of Wrangling and a Spirit of Opposition. Some Men, indeed, may be attached to this or that Party, for the Sake of acquiring Power or Interest. : And are no such Persons to be found in the Church ? But there are good Men in all Parties, who are not actuated by those mean and inglorious Motives, who as much claim our Regard, as the others merit our Contempt. If, then, there may be some Customs retained and observed by us, which we look upon as indifferent, the Use or Forbearance of which having no real Merit or Demerit, what so
unrea-

unreasonable or unjust in the Request to alter or cancel them, what so imprudent or unchristian to yield to and comply with it?

It may be said, that they will not stop here, but endeavour to have all Forms, their own excepted, abolished. This the Zealots of the Party may strive to accomplish, who, like the Church Zealots, are for giving up nothing, and always insisting upon their own Terms: Both of whom, whatever they profess to know, practise little of Christianity; and in the Opinion of the sober and prudent, should be treated as Lunatics, whose only Fears are, that the Church should have too much, and the Meeting any Power, and their Temporalities suffer. The Generality of Men, who are either weak or ignorant, unable or unwilling to judge for themselves, are imposed upon and deceived, and admit their Noise and Clamour, that the Church would be in Danger, or Conscience be oppressed, for Reason and Argument. But the moderate of both Parties, who are already agreed in Sentiments, a few Obstructions being removed, would soon come to an Accommodation; and the others, notwithstanding the so much boasted Zeal, would
soon

soon follow the Example, to preserve their Power and Interest.

It cannot be proved, that any Thing human is so perfect, as to stand in no Need of Emendations. Perfection is only peculiar to Revelation. Time and Necessity occasion many Changes and Alterations. Customs and Ceremonies observed and practised in one Age, are laid aside and disused in another, not being necessary nor convenient. The revising or rejecting any Thing received from ancient Times, or what our Ancestors have invented for our Use and Service, and hath been transmitted to us, is no Reflection upon their Wisdom or Judgment; unless it can be shewn, what the warmest Advocate will not assert, that they had effectually guarded against future Contingencies, and were inspired. They had Parts and Ingenuity, and their Writings merit Attention; but they are not to be implicitly received, nor their Rules and Directions implicitly followed. If then by a few Alterations made in those Things, which have not the Sanction of Divine but Human Authority, many Christians would be happily united, and Christianity served by promoting Harmony and Charity, instead
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of Strife and Variance amongst Christians, amongst Protestants of the same Nation and Kindred, (the Design and Intention of making Ecclesiastical Laws) what should hinder the Execution?

What is the Protestant Liberty, so frequently talked of? Amongst other Advantages received by the Reformation, this is reckoned not the least, the free Use of the sacred Writings. But is this Use real or pretended? What is the Difference between Papal Usurpation and Protestant Liberty? The Pope locks up the Scriptures, the Church confines the Understanding: With both the Church is to be implicitly believed, or else Rack and Tortures are brought forth for the refractory and disobedient by the one, Excommunications, &c. thundered out by the other. The one not so terrible indeed to endure, yet very affecting in its Consequences; and what it might be imagined, would not be permitted in a Country, where the People are remarkable for a tender Disposition, not only to the good and worthy, but even to those, whose Sufferings are just, owing to their Deserts. Is it not, to say the least of it, ungenerous and inhuman to condemn or punish for speculative Notions, such as are found to be obscure

scure, doubtful and ambiguous in the sacred Writings? How absurd and ridiculous to require Men to believe and practise, what appears to be consonant and agreeable to Scripture, when they are debarred and denied the Privilege of judging of it by Scripture?

In the Gospel how few are the Articles of Faith! Yet how have they been enlarged and multiplied by general Councils and Synods, which have proved little better than general Evils. They rather encouraged than weakened the Cause, which they were assembled to condemn; and from the Feuds, Quarrels and Contentions they produced, the Clergy parted worse Christians and greater Enemies to each other, than they were before they met; and by the Distresses and Persecutions, which the stronger inflicted upon the weaker Party, they exposed Christianity to Contempt and Ridicule, and made themselves the Jest of the less knowing but more charitable Pagan in ancient Times, and the Pity of the more sensible and understanding Christian in these Days.

Is the Church of England less infallible than the Church of Rome? Is implicit Faith less an Act of Obedience, or less insisted on now, than before the Reformation?

tion? Why then is it strictly enjoined, not to say, teach, or preach any Thing contrary to the Articles, &c. Why is it required, that they should not be interpreted in any other Sense, but what is literal, and that Sense not to be our own? If these are not, what are the Doctrines of Infallibility and implicit Faith? Are the Matters required to be believed and practised; true and consonant to the Word of God? What need then of Restrictions and Prohibitions? Can the Cause of Truth receive any Injury from the most rigid Examination? If they are not, why should they be maintained and defended? Every Christian has a Right to enquire and examine into the Credit and Authority of the Gospel; why not the Injunctions and Decrees of the Church? Are they more sacred? It may not be impertinent to observe, that any one may, without exposing himself to any temporal Inconveniences, interpret a Passage of Scripture contrary to the general and received Reading and Meaning, but not with the same Freedom and Safety an Article of the Church.

If the Authors and Compilers of these Articles were liable to Error and Mistake, (and who will say, that they were not?) is it doing any Injustice to their Shades to

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examine

examine the Reasonableness and Authority of what they have imposed? Is it not our Duty so to do, lest we should be imposed upon or deceived, and led to acknowledge that for divine Truth, which may have had none other Foundation than human Wit, Conceit or Prejudice? They had Learning and Abilities, and so had many of the ancient Fathers; but an immoderate and untempered Zeal for Orthodoxy has carried both too far, has been the Occasion of not a few Mistakes, of much Disturbance, of more Dissention in the Church, and been productive of violent Persecutions.

Christianity hath greatly suffered by speculative Opinions. Parties have been formed, and Enmities cherished and encouraged, because Men would not receive arbitrary Determinations in those Points, of which the Imposers had no sure and certain Knowledge; therefore they should only have proposed, not demanded, Acceptance. To mention the Articles concerning original Sin, Predestination, and Election, which have been Subjects of great Controversy, and will, in all Probability, so remain; there are several Passages in Scripture which agree with the Sense of the Articles upon those Subjects: But it must be acknowledged

known, that there are not wanting others, which seemingly contradict it. Some therefore have admitted, and others have rejected them; both, it is to be charitably hoped, from a commendable Zeal for the Interest of Christianity, lest it should be thought to maintain or countenance any Thing that might be construed injurious to the Wisdom, the Goodness, or the Justice of God. But however different their Sentiments in these curious and abstruse Matters, yet the Necessity of a Redeemer, of good Works and Faith in Christ, are by both acknowledged, approved, and recommended. And it should not be concealed, that these opposite and contradictory Opinions have been maintained and defended by Persons remarkable for their Piety and Learning. The Passages of Scripture, which are quoted in Defence and Support of these Opinions, are inconsistent; they may be reconciled, but it must be acknowledged, that they have their Difficulties. Is the Scripture then clear in these Points? The voluminous Tracts that have been published prove the Reverse: If it had, these different Opinions would not have commenced so soon, nor have continued so long in the Church. If Christ, then, and his Apostles have not settled, can any one uninspired absolutely de-

termine them? Can any human Authority peremptorily fix, what is, and must be, by all moderate Men, confessed to be ambiguously delivered? We may approve either Opinion, but with Submission, should condemn neither: Who is right or wrong, will be known hereafter; but right or wrong, mere Opinions, if we are careful to execute our Lord's Commands, will be forgiven. They are Subjects out of the Reach of the human Understanding; the Knowledge of which may make Part of the Reward of blessed Spirits in another State. Some Men have made it Herefy to read *o* for *os*, &c. and have damned Mankind, perhaps, for an Error of the Transcriber, or a Corruption of the Text; but the Sentence, it is hoped, will not be ratified in Heaven. It is a nice and difficult Matter to speak concerning those Articles in a Manner not offensive, which may not be inconsistent either with the Doctrines of Free Will and Human Liberty, or the divine Attributes. It is, therefore, the most prudent, neither too curiously to explore, nor too confidently to determine concerning them.

Article the sixth, saith, *Holy Scripture containeth all Things necessary to Salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man,*

Man, that it should be believed as an Article of Faith, or be thought requisite, or necessary to Salvation. Article the twentieth, concerning the Authority of the Church, faith, *That it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any Thing, that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one Place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another.* Hath not every one, therefore, the Liberty, who has an Ability, to enquire into the Consistency of the Articles with the Scriptures? If they require nothing to be received and admitted, but what is plainly and clearly warranted by it, is it not fit, before it is received and admitted, to compare it with them? Article the nineteenth faith, *That the Church of Hierusalem, Alexandria, Antioch and Rome have erred.* And may not the Church of England err, or if it better pleases, be mistaken? The Church hath asserted, that its Articles are consistent with Scripture; but how is this Consistency to be known, unless by comparing one with the other? If, upon the Comparison, a Likeness and Agreement do not appear, is not the Obligation to receive them void, or can it be reasonably demanded of such to receive them? Does it then seem just and equitable to exclude Persons out of the

Church for using a Liberty, which the Church hath allowed them? Persons whose Learning would have been of Service to it, if it had employed them, whose exemplary Lives, and strict Virtue have been an Honour and Ornament to their Profession, and their excellent Writings have fully and solidly proved the Necessity, Usefulness and Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, to the no small Terror and Confusion of Infidelity.

When was any civil Law so perfect, or so absolutely established, as not to admit of a Repeal or Amendment? In no State or Empire of Note, but the Medes and Persians, whose Example none chose to copy; for this simple Reason, because human Knowledge is scanty and imperfect, cannot discover all the Inconveniences, which may arise to the Subject; which are to be known only by Time and Experience, and which, though useful in one Age, have been reversed in the next. Should not the same Prudence and Moderation appear in the making and ordaining Ecclesiastical Laws? For the Church neither claims, nor has Perfection.

To the Candid and Unprejudiced, it may be said the Articles, &c. must appear to be
excellent,

excellent, just and good; and therefore what every good and pious Man will subscribe. But have there been no good and pious Men, who have refused Subscription? Had they not as much Learning, and as little Prejudice as those, who have subscribed? The Motive that induced the one to subscribe, and the other to refuse Subscription, was the same, *a Regard for the Honour of Religion and their Conscience.*

There are many popular Clamours raised and encouraged against these Men, and their Plea of Conscience has been termed a Cloak for Iniquity. But Calumny and Slander are the Instruments, which Zealots use to propagate their own Opinions, and confute their Adversaries; and though illiberal and disingenuous in Men of Letters, and contrary to the loving and charitable Temper which is justly allowed to be the distinguishing Mark of Christianity, it has been the Custom ever since the Apostolical Age for one Party to traduce and misrepresent the Characters of the opposite Party. This Behaviour hath always had the intended Effect upon weak and little Minds, in keeping up a Spirit of Malevolence and Contradiction, and has been the Sanction of the

several Oppressions and Persecutions recorded in Ecclesiastical History.

What the Pagan alledged in Excuse for the Barbarities exercised upon the Christian, was the Plea used to excuse the Degradations, Fines, Imprisonments, Banishment and Death, which the cruel Zealot inflicted upon an innocent, if mistaken Brother, pretended Impieties and Immoralities. The Maxim being useful was adopted, and the Example imitated by succeeding Ages. But it is hoped, that will no more prevail to the Disgrace of Christianity, and the standing Jest of the Infidel.

Moderation seems to gain ground: Party Distinctions are fading, Animosities subsiding, and Men of different Opinions and Persuasions are not ashamed of being known to and conversing with each other, of receiving and returning Acts of Kindness and Civility. In their Writings they behave like Gentlemen and Christians, the censorious and opprobrious Language of former Times being almost laid aside. I know the Friends of Moderation are stigmatized, but unjustly, as the Enemies of the established Church. What the Term Orthodoxy was in ancient Times, the established Church now is, the Bugbear with which Zealots
terrify

terrify the Weak and Ignorant, and make them believe, that to offer Concessions to Dissenters, is doing an Injury to the Church and hurting the Constitution: But the Reverse is true; and History will confirm the Truth of the following Observation, that the more People are united in religious Sentiments, the greater will be the Peace and Order of the State. Whatsoever produces Harmony and good Nature amongst Mankind, can be of no Prejudice to public or private good, nor any Disadvantage to the Cause of Christianity.

Is the public good promoted and advanced by these Differences? Does private Property suffer no Injury, or does it receive any Advantage from their Continuance? What Partiality in Trade! How is Business confined within our own particular Sect! By having Dealings with any of a contrary Persuasion, a Man has oftentimes risked, sometimes forfeited his Credit and Reputation. A Name with many has been the only Objection against, and to others the greatest Recommendation to Favour and Esteem. How many have been excluded from Places of Profit and Trust, and others of slender Abilities and less Merit been preferred before them, because they have spoken
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of the Errors and Mistakes of their Christian Brethren with Temper and Candour : But Men of Sense are now ashamed of this ridiculous Conduct, and the Populace will find it more for their Interest not to encourage it.

The Church, it may be said, is a Society ; and Laws are necessary for the Establishment and Preservation of Order and Government ; without them all would be Anarchy and Confusion. The Word Church is not to be understood in a limited Sense, but comprehends all Christians of whatever Denomination, who endeavour to act agreeably to the Gospel Morality, however they may differ in speculative Points, Points not clearly and plainly revealed. The Laws made, whether they respect Matters of Faith, Practice, or Modes of Worship and Discipline, should be such as would oblige many, and exclude few. Have we found this Success in our Church? Are there no Divisions? Are we all of one Mind? Do we all think the same Thing? The contrary is well known. This, it is said, is owing rather to a perverse and obstinate Humour, than to any Defect and Imperfection in the Laws. Whatsoever may have been the Cause of this Disagreement,
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it must be confessed, that in their Lives and Writings, many of them who dissent from it, have appeared to no Disadvantage to Christian Piety and Humility.

I do not insinuate, that Laws are unnecessary ; but as nothing human is allowed to be perfect, they should not be absolute. They were designed, when made, to guard against the Corruptions of Rome, and to reconcile Men to the Church ; but they have not produced those Effects, and in all Probability never will. As an Union is what all prudent and good Men wish to see, would it be amiss to have them revised ? Is the Time improper, when the ruling Powers of each Party are Men of Learning and Moderation, not employed as heretofore in reviling and caluminating, railing and exclaiming against each other's Person and Character, nor the Pulpit prostituted to serve those mean and shameful Purposes, but in recommending and enforcing Christian Virtue and Piety.

This seems to shew, that an Union is not, as some have imagined it to be, impossible : But some Concessions must be made. To have their Approbation in some Things, it cannot be unreasonable to grant their Requests in others ; for as it is not to
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be thought, that they will admit all the Injunctions of the Church, so neither will they reject all. But whether it is as prudent as it is reasonable to make the Experiment; whether it is as politic, as it is Christian, to attempt an Union, let others determine. But whether it is attempted or not, let us, however we may disagree in religious Sentiments, be ready to do all good Offices to each other, and love as Brethren.



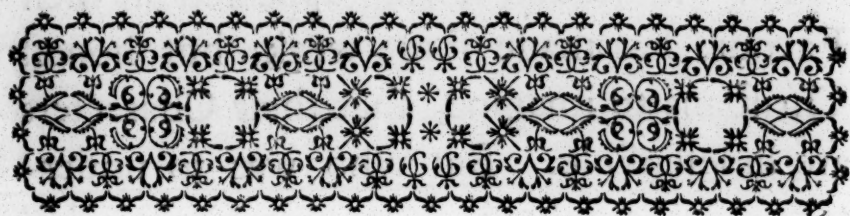
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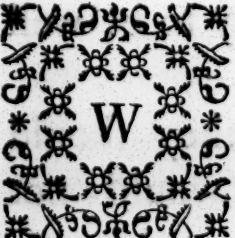
AN
A P O L O G Y
FOR THE
C O N D U C T
OF THE
SUPERIOR CLERGY.







A N
A P O L O G Y
F O R T H E
C O N D U C T of the S U P E R I O R C L E R G Y.

HEN I wrote the following
Apology, I had no Intention
of making it publick, but find-
ing the good Effect it had up-
on a private Communication,
I thought by that Means it would be more
extensive. As their sacred Persons have
been long exposed to Calumny and Con-
tempt, and Religion has not a little suf-
fered on that Account, for which they have,
even their most inveterate Enemies allow it,
the

the highest external Regard and Veneration, the Design cannot be unacceptable.

No Vindication having appeared in their Favour, has made some weak, but honest Christians to imagine, that their Characters are indefensible. But who was to undertake it? To defend their own Cause, tho' in itself just and reasonable, would be deemed prejudiced, and the Defence, if read, would not be regarded. I have therefore undertaken it, entirely unprejudiced, being of the Party aggrieved, and well qualified, having been long acquainted with the popular Clamours raised and encouraged against them; not to mention my Impartiality in giving the Objections their full Weight and Force, which Circumstance will, I hope, occasion the Reply to be well received.

I most earnestly desire, if they should read this Apology, that they would not openly applaud nor commend it; because such a Conduct will naturally create Prejudices against it, as it may be then thought, that it was performed at their Request.

The Style indeed is low, but not improper. The Objections obviated have mostly prevailed amongst the lower Class of People, who have not Leisure to peruse, nor Genius

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to understand an elegant Composition. There are some whose Anger and Resentment I shall have Reason to fear: But, I hope, the great Services I have done them, will move them to rescue me out of their Hands, and convince them and the World, that they will never desert their true Friends.

A late Commentator, in his Preface, has said some Things not well pleasing to them: An Answer to which was attempted by an Apologist. But their known Contempt of worldly Pomp and Wealth, sufficiently confutes the one, and their Candor and Impartiality, in judging of Things wrote in their Favour, will prevent them from being imposed upon, and deceived by the specious Reasoning of the other. The former seems to have wrote against them out of Pique and Resentment, because his Hopes of Preferment may have been disappointed; and the latter is prejudiced in their Behalf, because, by his Apology, he may expect his Hopes of Preferment to be gratified.

The same cannot be objected to their present Apologist. I have lost no Preferment, and never courted any. What I have had, I have enjoyed with Content, and whatever Addition was received, it was

unexpected. I neither write for, nor fear the Loss of Temporal Interest. If I have it, welcome; if I have it not, I am not deceived. I trust therefore, that you will allow me to be better qualified to vindicate their Characters than any other Apologist; and these Professions will incline their Enemies to read this little Piece with Candor, may dispose them for the future to treat them with Respect, if they will not believe all that I have said to be true, and to think that if they are not so good as they should be, they are not so bad as they have been represented.

It would be weak to imagine, that all Clamours against them will, by this Apology, be silenced, or future Invectives prevented; but I promise in an ensuing Work*, that every Complaint, which hath been or shall in the mean Time be thrown out against them, either from the Press or the Pulpit, from Newsmongers or Pamphleteers, will be fully and carefully answered; which will be communicated to the Publick, as soon as the Collection of Examples of their Beneficence, &c. can be completed. In which I hope for their Assistance, not willing to rely upon the Credit and Veracity of the Inferior Clergy, who may through Fear or
Design

* The Life of a Curate, with Prints.

Design conceal or misrepresent Facts. By this Means their Adversaries will be sooner silenced: Even their R—— W—— J——'s, &c. will be ashamed of themselves, and not able to speak one Word more against them.

I must here favour the Commentator, because it is to do them Justice, in saying that he was mistaken, when he insinuates, that they would all go to ——, he certainly meant P——y. Their most severe and bitter Enemies will not sure allot them so hard a Fate. Considering the Millions of Souls their constant and laborious Preaching saves, they deserve not to feel the Extremity of Pain, if for their private Faults they cannot enjoy the highest Degree of Happiness.

It is certain, that they cannot be included amongst the Number of those miserable Wretches, notwithstanding what he or others may say or think, who make a Gain of Godliness, nor amongst those whom St. James speaks of*. For allowing that they are rich, &c. it is well known, that they never keep back the Hire of their Labourers; for the Agreement they make with them is faithfully discharged, though they

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* Chap. v.

may not have what their Labours deserve. In which it is evident, that they can be guilty of no Fraud or Injustice, since every one has an undoubted Right to dispose of his own Property.

As there is Reason to suspect, that the Invectives daily thrown out against the Superior Clergy, are at the Instigation of the Gibeonites or inferior Clergy, Persons contemptible and inconsiderable; I should be glad of knowing what they mean or aim at, by authorising and countenancing these Clamours, against Men remarkable for their Virtues and Abilities? The Wealth and Power, which they possess, are the just Rewards of Merit. Is it Pride or Ambition that has moved and lifted them up? If they think, that they are entitled to the same Favours, let them first deserve them. If they covet their Honours, they must by the same Methods endeavour to procure them, by learned Writings, constant and laborious Preaching. But if they have neither Genius nor Inclination for such Things, let them be content in the Station which Providence has allotted them. Let a City Lectureship be the utmost of their Ambition; never let them seek for Rectories, Prebendaries, &c. for they have not
Parts

Parts nor Politeness fit and adequate for such Places.

THE A P O L O G Y.

WHAT I have undertaken may be difficult to execute, but it is useful and necessary; for as many are influenced in their Actions, more by what they hear, than what they see and read, if the Superior Clergy should be thought, as represented, faulty, they will not think well, or be indifferent in the Practice of Religion.

I am likewise apprehensive, that what shall be offered will merit but little Esteem; for the Generality of Men are already prejudiced against me, and prepossessed with an idle Notion, that their Conduct is indefensible. But as it is the Business of an Honest Man, and the Duty of a Christian, fairly to deliver and boldly to speak, what may appear to him to be the Truth, the Treatment, which I may meet with, cannot deter me from the Execution of my Design. If I reap none other Benefit, yet there is a certain Satisfaction, known only to those who feel it, in defending injured Innocence.

The first Complaint against the Superior Clergy is, that the Ancients had less Incomes and were content; but these are never satisfied with Preferment. Two Livings, a Prebendary and Deanery are not enough, something more is wanted, which when obtained, Want still increases.—How absurd and ridiculous would it appear to be, to have nothing else of the Primitive Times, but its Poverty! That might be then necessary to procure Converts, but now as every poor Man is contemptible, if they were poor, they would soon become contemptible; for Men are valued according to their Wealth, and every one is accounted so much the better than another, by how much he is the richer. The State of the Church is greatly altered. Dignity must be supported; for no one honours a Title without an Estate. Besides, all their Income is not expended solely to support their Dignity, as is very evident from a Multitude of private Gifts and Donations; which, if publickly known, you would blush to charge them with Avarice. If they did those Things openly, you would accuse them of Pharisaical Ostentation; if they do them privately, you condemn them for Hypocrites. Hard Treatment! How must they act to please you?

Is there any charitable Scheme, but you may find *one* of them a Subscriber to it? If the Poor want Relief, or any Object of Distress appears, who more ready and willing to afford Assistance? If then Pluralities are coveted, you may be assured, that it is to do the more Good; and though you may not see the Good done, yet there can be no Reason to doubt it. It is owing to an extraordinary Modesty and Humility, that their Works do not publicly appear.

You who are a Layman should not complain, that the Clergy of old did not covet Wealth, nor die rich; for the Laity, in the primitive Times, hated Wealth as much, and died as poor. If then the Laity amass Bags of Gold for temporal Conveniences, the Clergy surely may, without Offence, save a few Mites to bestow upon charitable Uses.

Another Complaint is, that they live elegantly and fare sumptuously every Day, whilst many of their Brethren, not inferior in Piety and Learning, can hardly procure a necessary Subsistence; the Stipends they allow being so small, from Twenty to Forty Pounds a Year; some not having so much.—What a low, mean and invidious Reflection is this! Supposing the Complaint to be true;

is it not as much as can be afforded and reasonably expected out of Livings, which yield no more than from three to six hundred Pounds a Year? Does it not become every Man to live agreeable to the Dignity of his Station, and according to what he is worth? Besides, it will teach Curates Humility, Self-denial and Mortification, which Youth, unless laid under Restraints, would never voluntarily consent to, nor perform: It takes them off from placing their Thoughts too much upon this World, and studying their own present Ease and Profit, instead of the future Good and Happiness of their Hearers. Not to mention, that the more the Superior Clergy have, the better able will they be to relieve the Poor; which Thing, like St. Paul, they make their particular Concern. The Scripture calls upon them to *let their Liberality be known unto all Men*. In Point of Duty therefore they can give no more, for then they could not administer to the Wants of *all Men*, which you find they are obliged to do. Sure no Christian can desire them to do that grudgingly or of Necessity, which their Conscience will not let them do.

It may be said, that in the Days of the Apostles it was different. They had then
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all Things in common. I answer, that the People, as well as the Priest, had then all Things in common. It is, therefore, unjust and unreasonable to desire the Clergy, equally to divide the Benefices of the Church, since the Laity will not imitate the other Example. But what have we Moderns to do with the old and obsolete Rules of the Apostles? The Circumstances of Things alter, and many Customs, which were then in Use, were not intended always to oblige. The principal Business of the Apostles was to preach the Gospel, and they renounced worldly Wealth and Grandeur, lest they should have been suspected of preaching Godliness, as some Men did, for Gain only. It would have been ridiculous in an Apostle, who asserted, that the Gospel condemned Covetousness and the Love of this World, to have appeared with an Equipage, or to have hoarded up an hundred thousand Pounds in a Chest. And would it not be equally ridiculous now, when the Estimate of real Worth is founded on outward Appearances, for any of the Superior Clergy to be seen in the Dress and Habit of an Apostle, with a Scrip, a Staff, Sandals on his Feet, one Coat, and never a Penny in his Purse?

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But why these Complaints of the Poverty of the Inferior Clergy? Is it any thing uncommon to see Merit cloathed in Rags, Interest preferred to Abilities, and Ignorance and Folly frequently usurping the Rewards of Virtue and Learning? Amongst all Orders of Men, these Evils obtain more or less. Would you have the Clergy to be singular? Amongst whom, where one obtains Preferment by Merit, an hundred purchase it by the Purse, by Family, or Party Interest.

*Granting that the Complaints produced are weak and unjust, what can be offered to excuse their interfering in Elections?——*I am almost ashamed to vouchsafe an Answer; yet it is necessary, lest the passing the Complaint over in Silence should be thought to proceed from Inability. Are not the Church and State so incorporated, that they cannot subsist apart? Is it not fit, that the Representatives of the People should be as well read in Religion as Politicks; as well acquainted with Christ, and the Writings of the Apostles, as Magna Charta and Acts of Parliament; that they should have honest Hearts as well as able Heads? Is it difficult to conceive, in what Danger the State would be, and what Detriment the Church would receive,
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if the Representatives of both should prove to be Men of dissolute and abandoned Principles? Do you then want to know, upon what Motives they solicit Votes? Do they ever recommend any, who are not zealous and approved Friends of the Church? Is it not from a tender and pious Concern for you as your spiritual Teachers, that they thus direct and persuade you, lest you should do an Injury to, or offend your Conscience? And will you say, that it is from the mercenary View of having a Living, Prebendary, or Sine Cure in Reversion? It is false. They are Men of a true publick Spirit, and always act upon the Principles of Conscience; they have ever had the Good of the State and the Honour of Religion, as well as the Profits arising from it, at Heart.

Another Complaint is against their preaching so seldom. We could bear with Pluralities, say many, provided the Possessors did more Duty. Not to labour in the Vineyard, but take the Fruits of it, is unjust; and so long as they neglect the former, and covet the latter, we must think that Pluralities are sought for more for the Improvement of their own Bodies, than the Salvation of the People's Souls.—To which I reply, that as it is the Business of some to preach, so is it the Business of others to defend

send the Gospel when attacked. If then they do not often appear in the Pulpit, you will always find them sweating in their Studies; if you do not hear, you may, if disposed, read their Works. But as proper Persons are provided to supply their Places, which if the Law Term holds good here, that what a Man does by his Substitute, he is said to do himself, the Complaint is groundless. Not to mention, that if they preached oftener, their Discourses would be as little attended to as their Curates: But now they are more weighty and longer retained, Mankind being fond of Novelty, and more attentive to what they know they shall hear but seldom. It is a well known Truth, that when Things or Persons have become familiar and of common Use, they are but little esteemed and regarded. Men are such unstable and inconstant Beings as to value nothing long.

The Superior Clergy have been frequently blamed for the partial Distribution of Livings in their Gift; which are for the most part disposed of to Relations and Intimates, and to such who are already provided for: Not so much regarding the Merit or Want of the Receiver, as the Power and Interest they shall acquire by such Presentations.—How weak the Reflection!

tion ! How unjust to blame them, for what every Man, if it is a Fault, is guilty of ! *Ought not every one*, as saith the Apostle, *to take Care of his own Household* ? Is it not an Instance of consummate Prudence and most strict Justice so to provide for them, as to place them out of the Possibility of ever wanting ? Besides, would it not be the highest Breach of Politeness and good Manners to neglect our rich Friends and Relations, though it might be to bestow the Favour upon a more deserving Stranger ?

Do you find in public Life, when Places of Profit are to be disposed of, that the Qualifications requisite to fill them, are always enquired into ? Does not every one consult for and promote the Good of his own particular Friend ? Do you not find, that the Man of an extensive Acquaintance, though of slender Abilities, is frequently preferred to him, who has only this Disqualification, that he is not enough known.

Do not Parents study to place their Children in such Posts, as are profitable and beneficial, though they may neither have Capacity nor Will to execute and discharge them, when obtained. You see that the Practice is general ; you can have no Reason therefore to blame the Clergy, 'till you
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have altered your own Conduct. When you shall act unbiaſſed, impartial and unprejudiced in the Diſpoſal of your Favours, it will be the Time, but not till then, to call your ſpiritual Fathers to account for the contrary Behaviour.

You may ſay, that ſpiritual Places are widely different from Temporal, as future Happineſs is of greater Moment and Concern than the preſent, and therefore none ought to fill them but Perſons of unblemiſhed Character, ſound Piety and good Addreſs; that they ſhould not be leſs willing, than able to diſcharge the Truſt reſoſed in them; that the Good of the Hearers ſhould be as much attended to as the Profits ariſing from them; and no one ſhould poſſeſs more Livings than he can perſonally reſide upon and diſcharge.—Theſe are Sentiments, it muſt be acknowledged, excellent and juſt. It is much to be wiſhed, that thoſe who have it in their Power, as well for their own Credit as the Intereſt of Chriſtianity, would act agreeably thereto. It is alſo wiſhed, that thoſe who admire theſe Sentiments, would, as Opportunities preſent, put them in Practice. For it is well known, when the Laity have a Power of electing their own Miniſters and Lecturers, they

they seldom elect according to Inclination and Will, but as Friends persuade, Party influences and Interest directs. It is ridiculous, therefore, in the Laity to blame their Pastors, for what they are equally deserving of Censure. That this Complaint against the Church may have its proper Weight, the contrary Practice should first prevail out of it.

It may be said, why do you attempt to excuse the Avarice of the Superior Clergy? Can you be ignorant, how they appropriate to themselves the most trifling Perquisites; and if refused to be surrendered, even such Things to which they can have no just Right or reasonable Pretension, they immediately dismiss their Curates from the Altar; how they reserve to themselves the most profitable Part of the occasional Duty, and leave the Drudgery to their Slaves; how they ——— Forbear any further Censure. It is not for Profit, but out of respect to the Rich, that they do any occasional Duty, for they have enough without it. Gehazi cannot be welcome, when Elisha is near. Besides, the Fee arising from it, is but a very small Addition to their Income. As to the Presents made to the Curates over and above the said Fee, though intentionally and really given to them, who
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has a better Right? Are they not their Representatives? As to giving the laborious Part of the Office to the Curates, it is not because they think it to be less their Duty, or beneath their Dignity, Character and Function, but to teach them those truly Christian Virtues, Patience and Humility?

Another Complaint is, that when the Curate has acquired the Favour and Esteem of the People, the Rector grows jealous, looks upon himself as undervalued, and soon discharges him.——The Servant should not be greater than his Lord. This Behaviour does not proceed from the Fear of a Rival in Piety and Learning. Poverty will hinder the Curate from being a learned Man, and the Cares for the Necessaries of Life will be no little Obstruction to his Piety. Can there be any just Reason then to suspect, that this Conduct is the Effect of Envy or Malice? And it is equally false and unjust to say, that it is from an Apprehension of his Power and Interest being lessened by the other's Merit and Applause: For he has in Possession what may make him to be feared, if it cannot procure him Reverence; and he has none Occasion to court the Esteem of his Flock, or dread their Displeasure; for whether or no the former is procured, or
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the latter avoided, the Payment of his Tythes is secured to him by Law.

Rectors thus behave towards their Curates, in order to check their Vanity and Ambition; for when they have become somewhat popular, they are apt to be led away with too great an Opinion of themselves, think that they really have the Merit, which weak and ignorant Men are lavish in bestowing upon them, forget the Respect and Deference due to Superiors from Inferiors, are restless and uneasy for Want of Preferment, and look upon themselves more deserving than their Masters. You may, like the levelling Tribe, be so impertinent to ask, wherein are they Superior? Have they greater Power in the Church? Are they not both equally Dispensers of the Privileges and Graces of the Gospel? What is there that the one can do, which the other cannot? What is it that they have, which these have not? *A Living*: That is the Thing which sets them at so great a Distance. And wherefore do you, who are a Layman, complain against this? Are you not frequently culpable in paying Respect to, or speaking well of those, who are accounted worthy rather on

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Account of their Riches, than their Virtues? Are you not fond of imitating the ridiculous Example of the Tyrians and Sidonians of old in revering them, who, but for their Wealth and Power, would be treated with Contempt and Ignominy.

But why do you complain of the Hardships of the Inferior Clergy? Many of them have more than they deserve. They are Men of little Note, of less Ability. Their Characters are indifferent, and their Behaviour is so insolent, that instead of adding to, it may be more prudent to lessen their Salary, and bring them back again to their fourteen and sixteen Pounds per Annum, if otherwise it may be necessary to make some Distinction. The most modest and decent Proposal of this Sort, is that of an Essex Vicar, that the Curates should be distinguished from the Rectors by wearing a Badge upon the left Arm. The Proposal did not meet with the Reception it highly merited. In all Probability it would have taken Place, had not this Inconvenience been foreseen; for by such a Distinction it would have been too publickly known, who did the most Duty. To disrobe them of the Scarf would be no little Diminution of
their

their Pride : But as most of their Superiors have as little Claim to it, this Proposal must be ineffectual. The best Method is to continue them at hard Labour and little Pay. The pale and meagre Look, the lean and lank Carcase, with the tattered and threadbare Gown, will be Distinction enough.

We are told in Scripture, that Christ hath ordained, that *they who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel*. This Passage hath been generally thus understood ; *That for all those, who perform the Office of a Minister of the Gospel, a decent and comfortable Provision should be made*. The Context seems to determine this to be the true Meaning. But as there are few who enjoy such a Provision, it will be better to understand it differently from the common Interpretation. It will be putting a Force upon the Words ; but it is excuseable, since our Lord's Appointment, which is general, would have never been fulfilled but in a few particular Persons. I suppose, therefore, that the living of the Gospel does not signify a temporal Maintenance ; for then Religion would appear, what it is commonly reputed to be, a Trade, Art, or Profession, by which Men, as in other

Employments, are to obtain their daily Support and Subsistence; but has Respect to a future State of Bliss and Happiness, to which those will be entitled, who have faithfully discharged the high Trust reposed in them. The Jewish Priests, as they were Preachers of a Law founded on temporal Sanctions, were to partake of temporal Blessings; but the Ministers of Christ, whose Religion is more particularly founded on Things future, not on Things present, were not to look for nor expect present, but future Comforts.

I must confess, that this Comment is not strictly just. I doubt not, however, of its Reception and Approbation both by the Superior and Inferior Clergy. By the former, because if the Passage is literally understood, many of them could not, as the Office of a Priest is seldom performed by them, lay claim to, nor enjoy their Temporalities; by the latter, because as they partake of few of the Comforts of this Life, if their Reward was not to be future, they of all Men would be the most miserable.

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There are more Complaints brought against the Superior Clergy * ; but as what have been produced, appear to be highly scandalous and invidious, and they are to be considered in another Tract, it is now unnecessary to mention them.

* Let it be remembered, that there are some amongst them whose Characters are unexceptionable, and whose Conduct needs no Apology.



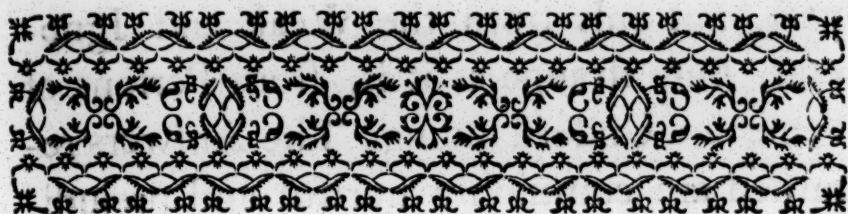
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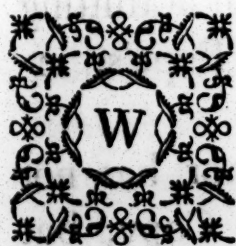
THE
CONDITION
OF AN
AUTHOR.







THE
C O N D I T I O N
O F A N
A U T H O R.



HOEVER proposes to become an Author, should previously resolve to bear Contradiction and Disappointment; be equally ready to learn as to communicate; and principally take Care not only to write, but live well. For no sooner has he made his Appearance in Publick, but the Eyes of the whole World are upon him. Then Enquiries begin. Who is he? Of what Note? Of what Party? Are his Principles and Morals good? How does he write? Does the Work contain any thing

thing new? Has the Bookseller recommended it? This Treatment he must expect, not only from the Weak and Ignorant, but, strange as it is, from Persons of Sense and Understanding. The Answers returned are commonly hurtful and prejudicial both to the Credit and Interest of an Author; for by them Works, not read, nor seen, have been condemned; and what, when perused, might have procured Esteem, have been censured through the Malevolence of a prejudiced Reader. These Reports find too easy an Access and too strongly influence. Men of Learning have a superstitious Veneration for the Parts and Persons of their Acquaintance, and are too apt to imitate the weak Papist in admitting their Authority to be, like the Pope's, infallible.

The Bookseller, if the Author has not offered him the Refusal of the Copy, but presumed to print for himself without his Licence, treats the Work with a Sneer. It is well known, that the Recommendation of the Trade is of singular Service to the Author's Interest, not his Reputation; and their Censures have proved as effectual as damning a Play by the Pit, though it frequently happens, that the one is censured
and

and the other damned, rather from Prejudice and Ignorance than Understanding and Judgment, and oftentimes discover both a Want of Sense and Delicacy of Taste. The Bookseller seldom knows more than the Title Page ; that determines the Fate of an Author with him. A Work indifferently executed will have a proper Sale, if it should merit his Approbation (many of his Customers relying upon his Opinion) which is not to be procured but by writing for or printing with him : An Author who writes for himself will meet with no Encouragement from him.

Not less hurtful to him are the Criticks; those who do not write themselves, but employ, rather misemploy, their Time in ridiculing and exposing, what they cannot imitate, and found their Merit upon Railery and Declamation. They allow of no Superior, hardly an equal in Knowledge and Judgment. The Subject, the Manner of treating it, the Stile, or Sentiments displease and offend them. They read only to find Fault, and all the Favour the best Author can expect, is to be looked upon as indifferent.

Little Praise and much Censure is the Fate of an Author, who has no Patron,
Title,

Title, Place, nor Purse. These, and these Qualifications only, have recommended Writings which deserved, and in all probability would otherwise have received, the publick Censure; whilst other Authors of more natural and acquired Parts, but penurious and undistinguished, have been, if at all, read with Indifference, and frequently stifled in their Birth. This was the Case of a learned and pious Divine, in the last Century, whose great Abilities, slighted and disregarded by his own Countrymen, were taken Notice of by Foreigners, and procured him singular Honours from abroad, which raised him from a Vicarage, in an obscure Place, to a Prelacy at Home; long merited, but without such an uncommon Incident might have never been conferred.

Praise and Censure are equally fatal to an Author, if he wants either Modesty or Resolution; for then he will either be too much elevated or depressed; he will entertain too high or too mean an Opinion of himself. In the former Case he will become presumptuous, conceited and positive; in the latter, he will be apt to tread in the beaten Track, and give himself to write agreeable to the Prejudices of Mankind. A Practice which he may the more readily
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fall into, because he will find it more for his Interest, than to oppose and contradict them.

An Author, who does not display more Learning than Understanding, who does not abound more in Reading than Invention, oftentimes meets with an unwelcome Reception. There is a Sort of Men amongst the Learned, who do not chuse to think for themselves, and are only pleased with those Writers, who are so weak or so foolish as with them to give up their Freedom. They are so strangely prepossessed in Favour of the Ancients, that they will read no Writings, but what are agreeable to their Opinions, or filled with large Extracts from them.

Greek and Latin Quotations do not so much shew good Sense, as the Possession, or Use of a large Library: By which Persons of no real Parts and Erudition have acquired the Esteem and Character of Learned Men. It is both profitable and reputable to adorn, rather to fill, a Work with Quotations. What might have been easily and more sensibly comprised in a small Pamphlet, has been by this Means worked up to an Octavo. This has been practised with great Success. Several have been rewarded
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and preferred, admired and celebrated, not for Invention and Reasoning of their own, but of others: So that mere Transcribers have assumed to themselves, the Credit and Reputation of great and learned Authors, for publishing Folio's; which setting aside the Table of Contents, Title Page, and a few Ligaments, little else of their own remains. This Esteem any Scribbler can acquire, by the Help of an Index, with a few Sentences of his own to make the Connection. An Author who does not humour these Admirers of ancient Writings, either by commending, defending, transcribing their Sentiments, writing Comments upon them, or citing them for Authorities, will be treated as ignorant, and his Works deemed of no Value.

I am persuaded, that I shall provoke the heavy Displeasure of these Antiquarians, for such slight Treatment of the Ancients. But if they would lay aside Prejudice and candidly consider, of what real Use they are, they would not be angry with me, nor implicitly follow them. In Regard to ancient Rites, Customs, Ceremonies or Matters of Fact, Pagan, Jewish or Christian, to which there may be any Allusions in Sacred Writ, their Writings are undoubtedly necessary
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and useful, and their Authority valid and good: But in respect of moral, natural or revealed Truths, their Sentiments can neither make them true nor false, and they will so appear, notwithstanding all that they have said for or against them; (whose nice and refined Explanations, have served to raise Doubts and encourage Controversies amongst Mankind) which require only common Sense and common Honesty to set forth and understand; which, however, will remain unsettled and undetermined, so long as Men continue to prostitute their Parts, and give up their Freedom of Thinking and Believing for Themselves.

The Sacred Writers may be credited with Safety, for they were inspired. Their Interpreters pretend not to Inspiration, and therefore, though pious and good, yet considering how strongly Prejudices do operate, the short Extent of the human Understanding, and its Imperfections, neither their Opinions nor Judgment, are to be implicitly followed and received. Every one, who can, is to judge for himself. Nature has given to Man that Liberty, and Christianity has not deprived him of it, though Popery has attempted it. If every one, who could, would have judged for himself, Christians
would

would not have been so divided, nor have been led to embrace Notions contradictory to Sense, Reason, Humanity and the Scriptures; nor would they have been so long, and so successfully propagated for the Service of Avarice, Ambition, Faction, Enthusiasm and Superstition. The Reader will, I hope, excuse this Digression upon the Ancients, when he reflects that most of the religious Controversies, have sprung not so much from the dubious and obscure Sense of Scripture, but their Opinions and Interpretations.

Next to these Antiquarians there are others of the Learned, who are never pleased with any Writings, but those which favour their own particular Studies or Prejudices, looking upon other Writings as useless and insignificant. The Metaphysician condemns Poetry; the Poet, Metaphysics; the Lawyer, Divinity; the Divine, Law; the Dissenter, Church Writings; the Churchman, those in Favour of the Meeting. These are Prejudices which have been adopted by Learned Men, and have proved of great Disadvantage to Truth as well as to Authors, whose Studies have been different. This Behaviour was almost sunk into Contempt, till revived by a late Professor of Astronomy, who

who endeavoured to render a Science ridiculous, by Witticisms and Buffooneries, the Uses of which he did not or would not enquire into.

Next to these, are such who read none but finished Pieces; other Compositions are too mean, incorrect or inelegant: Compositions, however, not less useful and necessary to the Bulk of Mankind, who would profit but little from the others, which require a Depth of Thought, which they have not, and Leisure which they are not Masters of, to examine into and understand. Style and Manner are to be acquired by Time, great Reading and frequent Writing: In religious Subjects not so much required. For the more Plainness and Simplicity, the less Art and Labour appear in such Writings, the more extensive their Influence: They do not indeed recommend themselves to the Virtuosi in Learning, who are only delighted and satisfied with Things difficult, if at all, to be understood, and above vulgar Apprehensions.

There are a few of a different Turn, who pay no Regard to the Author but the Work, and like the industrious Bee can extract some Sweet from every Flower. They know that every one is not born to

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be a Newton, a Boyle, a Locke, a Butler, a Milton, a Pope, &c. Writers who will ever please, though they have not escaped the Envy and Malice of false Criticism. They can commend and praise the little Notices and Informations of inferior Writers, which those Genius's, taking more noble Flights, or treading in Paths but little frequented, passed by not unknown, but unnoticed.

Another Disadvantage to an Author arises from the Want of a learned Acquaintance, upon whose Friendship he might rely; by whom his Works might be corrected, revised, and placed out of the Power of the envious, malicious, or ill-natured Critick. They would strike out many Inaccuracies, &c. which an Author, partial to himself and fond of his own Compositions, is apt to pass over. It is best to see with other Mens Eyes, for we are all inclined to be blind to our own Defects. The unprejudiced Reader, and such a one is a true Friend, sees Things in a different Light. Great is the Advantage of such a Friendship. I know an Author now in high Esteem in the Republick of Letters, who procured an extraordinary Reputation by it, having been publickly

lickly honoured with a Degree at the University.

Another Disadvantage to an Author arises from writing upon Subjects which have been discussed; so that in the Opinion of many he only adds to the Number of Books, already too great. If the Books wrote in every Science and Art were satisfactory, and so composed, as entirely to remove and fully answer all future Doubts and Exceptions, the writing more would be ridiculous and absurd. To assert that they are, is not less ridiculous and absurd. If the Subject is the same, the Thought and Proofs may be different, and the Manner of ranging, disposing and expressing them, more striking and affecting. Every Age is capable of improving upon the preceding, either by correcting its Errors, or displaying its Beauties and Excellencies in a new and more advantageous Light. Science and Art may be further extended; they are not arrived at the utmost Limit of Thought, Ingenuity and Experience, as modern Discoveries and Improvement shew. Truth will never be without Adversaries, who dress up the old Exceptions in a new Taste, and by that Means, if they do not in some Degree render former Answers useless, make it necessary to put them into another Form.

An Author, if young, finds but few Friends. His Youth is a grand Exception against his Writings, his Arguments being generally estimated by his Years: But Wisdom does not belong only to the Aged, nor does the Beard always make the Philosopher. If the Subject is of Importance, his Abilities are questioned, or the Attempt censured, either as weak or bold. This Treatment is ungenerous; for if Persons of more Knowledge and Experience, either chuse not, or from other Connections and Engagements cannot, what so blameable if others of less Note and Capacity undertake it? What Matter is it, if the Cause of Virtue and Religion is promoted, who are the Advocates? The Reasoning may not be so powerful, nor the Arguments so convincing as in the Hands of a more able Writer; yet weak and defective as both may be, some Persons may be both entertained and improved by the Reading. Writers, whosoever they may be, deserve not the publick Censure but Approbation, if they write with Candor and Decency, and have a strict Regard and Attention to what, upon the most strict and impartial Examination, appears to be the Truth.

The

The Credit of an Author is best preserved, though his Interest is least promoted by anonymous Writings *. By them he oftentimes meets with Praise instead of Censure, and is privately applauded, for what, if known, he might be publicly condemned. Names have a great Effect upon many Readers. I knew an Author, who published his first Essay in this Manner, left the Greatness of the Subject and the Meanness of his Person, should have raised Prejudices against it. The Method proved of singular Use, as it procured a kind and favourable Reception, and he acquired no small Reputation by it. Some Time after he ventured to put his Name to a second Edition; By which his Reputation was lost, his Abilities were questioned, his Arguments, before deemed strong and nervous, were treated as weak and inconclusive, and he was in general looked upon as a Person

* The Bookseller must share the Profit with him; happy if that will content. If ingenious and poor, he will afterwards be enlisted in the Service of the Trade, and be obliged to write, not as Truth, but as his Master dictates, which will always be agreeable to the reigning Taste and Humour of the Age, right or wrong, because the Interest of the Bookseller is chiefly promoted by it.

very improper for the Subject he had attempted. The Publication of Works in this Manner, besides removing many Prejudices, frequently prevents the Envy and Malice of little Criticks, who are afraid of an Ambuscade, lest the Authors should prove an Over-Match for them.

To write against Prejudices, Civil or Religious, if they are of a long standing and have gained a general Approbation, is very disadvantageous to an Author. He must expect Candour and Civility from few; Words of Reproach and Virulence from many. Let him, however, forbear Resentment, for that betrays a Weakness, which lays him open to his Adversaries, and destroys the Force of his Arguments. He will have Need of Spirit and Resolution; for what he writes for the Improvement and Conviction of others, frequently terminates in the Ruin of his own Interest. Whatsoever may be the Consequence to himself, let him strictly adhere to Truth; otherwise in Proportion to his Reputation and Influence, he may be the Occasion of much Error, and be productive of more Evil than Good amongst Mankind, which every Writer should be careful to avoid.

Let

Let him, like the true Patriot, be disinterested, free from any selfish private Ends, having the Publick Good solely in View; then if he merits nothing here, he will not fail of receiving a proper Reward hereafter.



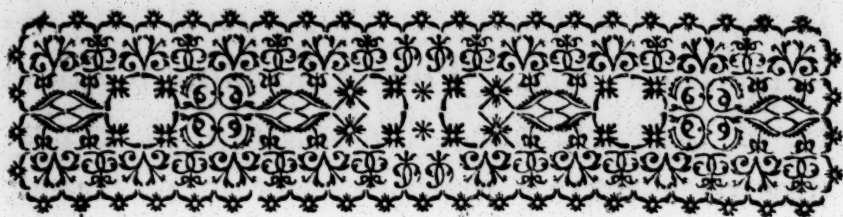
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SERMONS.





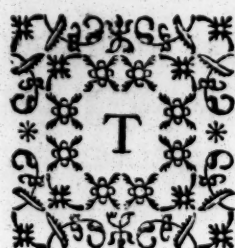


S E R M O N S.

CAUSES *assigned for the Continuance*
and Progress of INFIDELITY.

2 TIM. ii. 25.

“ In Meekness instructing those that op-
“ pose themselves ; if God peradventure
“ will give them Repentance to the ac-
“ knowledging of the Truth.”

HE singular Benefits and Ad-
vantages Society reaps from
the Profession and Practice of
Christianity, should recom-
mend it to the Esteem and
Reverence of all Men. If its Authority
was dubious or false, yet as it appears to be
cal-

calculated for the present Good of Mankind, every one who knew it so to be, should rather endeavour to conceal than divulge the Secret. The Concealment would be of Service, but a Publication of Prejudice to a State; inasmuch as it is found, that Men are with Difficulty kept within due Bounds by human Laws, though rigorous and severe: And therefore it may be reasonably supposed, that, was the Opinion of a future State destroyed, the Sanction of the Christian Religion, we should see less of Honesty and more of Fraud, less of Virtue and more of Vice, less Peace and Satisfaction, more Disquiet and Discontent in the World. Notwithstanding Christianity has been thus useful and beneficial to Society, yet there are not wanting Persons who openly treat it with Contempt, who neither respect its Authority, nor observe its Laws. There have been sufficient Proofs offered to establish the former, and the latter need no Recommendation, yet Infidelity prevails; it prevails, notwithstanding the Arguments in Favour of Revelation are neither weak nor defective. To what Causes are we then to attribute its Continuance and Progress? What should occasion the Scriptures to be suspected? To the following,

ing, amongst other Causes, this Obstinacy and Perverseness, in opposing and rejecting its Evidence, may be owing.

First, The severe Treatment Infidels meet with in our Disputes and Controversies with them.

Secondly, The scandalous and immoral Lives of Christians.

Thirdly, The various Sects and Parties in Religion, and the contradictory Tenets espoused, maintained and defended from the same Scriptures, believed and adhered to by their respective Followers.

First, The severe Treatment Infidels meet with in our Disputes and Controversies with them, is one Cause of the Continuance and Progress of Infidelity.

We, like the Apostles, who solicited Christ to revenge the uncivil Treatment of the Samaritans by commanding Fire from Heaven, invoke divine Punishments upon their Heads, use opprobrious and insulting Language, and, not content with such Treatment, ungenerously and unnaturally, not to say unchristianly, pronounce Damnation upon them. A Practice so common, that to treat them courteously, we may be suspected of Infidelity. But let me ask, on what Account is this Treatment? Is it, because they presume to

to examine into the Evidence of Religion? If this is done, not for the Sake of cavilling, but their own private Satisfaction; not to raise and encourage Doubts in others, but to convince themselves of its Truth; in what are they to be blamed? If Religion will not bear the Scrutiny of Reason, is repugnant to, or inconsistent with it, it is not a true but a false System, and its Influence can no longer exist, like to the Pagan Systems of old, than as the Power of the State continues to uphold and support it. But as it is of better Original than Paganism, so is it supported by a different Authority. Its Author is God; its Support Reason; without the Use and Exercise of which (which some over-zealous Christians are for wholly laying aside in Matters of Religion) we should not be able to distinguish Truth from Error, nor to guard against the Delusions and Deceptions of artful and designing Men. To take Things upon Trust is not only an Abuse of the Faculties God has endowed us with, but makes Religion to be the Effect of Place or Education.

What has Truth to fear from the most strict Enquiry? To condemn or prohibit such an Enquiry, creates Suspensions and
Jea-

Jealousies, is apt to make Men less candid and impartial, and to look upon that to be the Effect of Fraud and Imposture, which deprives them of the Use of their Reason, and leaves them no more Understanding than the Brute. It is not criminal to doubt of the Evidence of Religion, nor to be unsatisfied with the Proofs of it, if the Mind is kept clear from Prejudice, if the Enquiry is candid and impartial, and our Lives governed by the Precepts, though uninfluenced by the Belief of Religion. Bigots and Zealots allot such Persons an hard Fate; but this need not surprise, since Christians, who differ from them, are no better treated. Damnation is presumptuously bestowed upon both.

It is, indeed, Obstinacy and Perverseness to disbelieve every Thing; the Truth of which we have not, nor can have any sensible demonstrative Proof, nor easily apprehend: It is also a Folly and Weakness to admit any thing of Importance to be true, without a just and strict Examination and as clear an Apprehension, as far as it can be obtained, of its Evidence, Fitness and Propriety. And is not Religion of the greatest Importance, not more to Mankind in general, than to every Individual? Does it

not

not belong to every one rightly to inform himself of it, that his Expectations of Happiness may be well founded, and he in the End not disappointed? So far from its being unlawful to procure such Information, that as Men we ought, and as Christians we are by our Religion required, to examine and search into its Authority. If we have Abilities, it is our Duty; it may be criminal to neglect it. If such did examine, Heresies and Enthusiasms would not so much prevail. Where Abilities are not, Reliance must be upon the Credit and Veracity of others. The Scripture saith, *He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.* But can any one imagine that an external Profession of Christianity will entitle him to Salvation? Let it

then be said that Infidelity, unless Immorality, Indolence, Neglect, Obstinacy or Presumption is the Cause, is the Object of Abhorrence. How rash, how bold is Man in thus prescribing the Terms of Salvation and usurping the Divine Power!

Vice and Folly frequently give Birth to Exceptions against Religion. Persons addicted thereto should rather excite our Pity, than provoke our Resentment. They suffer enough here; let us leave them to God here-

hereafter, not condemn them to a Punishment, which we have no Power to inflict, since such Behaviour tends rather to harden, than reclaim them. Not content with this unjust Condemnation, we treat them as the vilest and the worst of Men, without any Principle of Honesty and Goodness, without Sense and Understanding: A Method not likely to be instrumental in their Conversion. Permit me to observe, that as we are entirely ignorant of the secret Springs of Men's Actions, a more charitable Opinion would better become us; it is more agreeable to the Character of a Christian, of which Christ's Rebuke to his Apostles is a Proof, *ye know not what Manner of Spirit ye are of*; it discovers more Humanity, witnesses the Prejudices and Imperfections of Human Nature; and it is certainly more prudent, if we expect to be successful in our Controversies with them.

Their Weakness may be complied with, and no Injury offered to Religion. ~~Unless~~ ^{Unless} they are used like Men, and argued with as reasonable Creatures, their Conviction and Reformation will be in vain attempted. No one, however, weak and insignificant, chuses to be so accounted; nor to be called a Fool, though he may deserve the Title:

An Appellation of that Sort will invalidate and set aside every Argument, though reasonable and just. Kindness and Civility are the best Means to procure Friends and reconcile Enemies : But to tell Men that they are entirely in the wrong, and that they shall be damned, unless they implicitly believe, not what the Scriptures always say, but, more frequently, our Interpretations of them, which they know are equally fallible with their own Sentiments, will be of little Service, as Experience has testified, from the few Converts made, in reconciling them to Christianity. The behaving towards them like Men will shew, that we have a real Concern for their Happiness, soften their Prejudices, and dispose them to think more favourably of, at least to treat Religion both in their Writings and Conversation with Temper and Decency. The contrary Behaviour will create a greater Disgust against it, and they will be led to think, that it tends only to destroy good Nature and good Manners, and to countenance Hatred and Strife, Cruelty and Revenge amongst Mankind.

Secondly, The scandalous and immoral Lives of Christians, is another Cause of the Continuance and Progress of Infidelity.

When

When we look around, and see how many profess, how few practise Christianity; when we observe Men, who should be distinguished for Virtue and Piety, Examples of Vice and Immorality: These Things must necessarily give to Persons, who either cannot or will not judge for themselves, an unfavourable Opinion of Religion. It is natural for such to think, when Men, remarkable for their Sense and Understanding, act in this Manner, who have Leisure and Opportunity for knowing the Truth of what they profess to believe, that they suspect its Credit and Authority. And as Vice has generally a stronger Ascendency and Influence than Virtue, it is not strange, that Men, addicted to unlawful Gratifications, should be glad to be released from Restraints, and to treat the Gospel as false, which by their Actions they would not have to be true.

There is no better Way of recommending the Practice of any thing, than by Example. It is extremely difficult to convince any one of the Usefulness and Necessity of what our Conduct proves to be indifferent. To talk of the Excellency of Christianity, when our Lives contradict our Words, is not likely to gain many Converts to it.

Christianity is indeed the same, notwithstanding all that can be said or done against it: Its Obligation and Authority not being lessened, though many are wicked enough to transgress its Laws.

But if we are really convinced of its Truth, and believe a future State of Reward and Punishment, how can we better satisfy others of this Belief and Conviction, than by letting our Lives and Conversation be agreeable thereto? In vain do we recommend the Practice of Goodness to others, unless we ourselves are good. In vain do we endeavour to set forth the Obligation to Temperance and Honesty, when we are intemperate and dishonest. In vain do we tell Infidels that our Religion is true, when we act as if it was false. All Arguments will prove ineffectual, unless we are influenced by its Precepts. To convince Men that there is a God, let us live as if there was one; to shew our Belief of a future State, let us behave like Men who are to give an Account in it; and if we admit the Truth of Christianity, let us observe its Laws. Infidels will then think that we are in Earnest, that there is something more in Religion than mere Shew and Pretence.

As

As Irregularity is the principal Cause of Infidelity, for a good Man is hard to be found who is an Infidel, no Method can be so effectual to check and discountenance it, and to procure that Esteem and Reverence for Religion, which it justly and truly, for its own Worth and Excellency, claims from all, than for Christians themselves to esteem and reverence it; since to treat it with Indifference and Contempt, to live in Opposition to those Laws, which they have solemnly engaged to observe, and to imitate the vicious and immoral Examples of the Libertine and Infidel, will undoubtedly promote the Cause of Vice, and strengthen, not weaken, the Cause of Infidelity. Of this we may be assured, that it will be impossible to convince Gainsayers of the Divinity of our Religion, unless its Power and Influence are shewn in our Lives and Conversation.

Thirdly, The various Sects and Parties in Religion, and the contradictory Tenets espoused, maintained and defended from the same Scriptures, believed and adhered to by their respective Followers, is another Cause of the Continuance and Progress of Infidelity.

These Differences reflect no little Dishonour upon the Professors of Christianity, not upon Christianity ; for it neither countenances, nor encourages Divisions amongst Men. Such Differences, the various Tempers, Interests and Prejudices of Mankind being candidly considered, are not strange; might so appear, if not to happen. We wish, that they were fewer in Number, and that Christians would comply with each other's Weakness, and give Way in Matters of little Moment, wherein neither their own Salvation, nor the Authority of the Gospel, are concerned ; for the inveighing and exclaiming against each other, wresting and perverting the Sense of the sacred Writings to confirm and support the Opinions espoused, making Things indifferent necessary, Things necessary indifferent, and obtruding private Interpretations as binding upon the Conscience of Men, cannot fail of bringing Religion into Disrepute with those, who are determined more by the Conduct and Behaviour of others, than their own Judgment and Reason.

These Differences have not only countenanced Infidelity, but have produced a Coldness and Lukewarmness in Religion : Differences

ferences which all honest and good Men, who have a Regard for Christianity and the Happiness of Society, wish to be composed. From thence have proceeded Troubles and Disorders in the State ; from thence a Corruption of Manners, as well as the Principle of Unbelief, generally flows. When weak Men, who judge not for themselves, observe these various and jarring Opinions ; when they see Kindness and Civility shewn, Preferment and Titles bestowed, not according to Merit and Ability, but according to a particular Sect or Following ; when they perceive that each Sect charges the other with asserting and maintaing Things contrary to the holy Scriptures, even doubting of the Salvation of those who differ from them ; what can they think, but that it is as good to be without Religion, since of whatsoever Sect they are, they shall be wrong, and their Salvation dangerous, if not precarious.

It is not our Business to talk of, but practise Religion. Let us rather endeavour to make our Lives agreeable to, than reconcile our Notions with it. Let us confine ourselves to Matters plainly delivered, not examine nor enquire into Things above our Reason and Understanding, nor impose the

Belief of any Doctrine as absolutely necessary to Salvation, of which we must confess that we cannot have the least Knowledge and Intuition. Let us love as Brethren, neither caluminating, condemning, nor persecuting each other; then Men of weak or wicked Principles will be inclined to think that Christianity is really calculated for the good of Mankind, when they shall see Harmony, Love and Union, instead of Dissention, Strife and Hatred, reigning amongst Christians. To these Causes, amongst others, are to be attributed the Continuance and Progress of Infidelity.

The following Advice will not, I hope, be thought useless; we wish indeed that it was unnecessary. As Infidelity is the genuine Offspring of Immorality; as Immorality much abounds in the Age we live; as by the Frequency and Universality of it, the Sense of Shame is lost, and a Regard for Decency is no more; as Men dare openly talk of and defend those Vices, which they have secretly committed; and as these Practices not only expose the Aggressors to future, but are productive of present Misery, let me intreat you for your own sake to be virtuous and good. I am persuaded a little Reflection will convince
you,

you, that it is for your temporal Interest so to be, and that there can be no true and real Enjoyment of Life without it.

Consider your Engagement as Christians, that you are declared Enemies to Vice. Remember that you forfeit the Reward promised, unless you act consistent with that Engagement. If a Regard for the Honour of God cannot influence you to observe his Laws, think on the Punishment you become obnoxious to by the Neglect: Believe me, rather believe yourselves, for you cannot be ignorant of this, that you will not long be wicked, before you are superior to the Power of Conscience, live as without Religion, and in the End declare against it: For he who is an Infidel in Practice, will soon be an Infidel in Principle.

Do not deceive yourselves. For what do you propose to yourselves by criminal and unlawful Gratifications? Do you expect to meet with no Interruption? Granting that they are at first pleasant and agreeable, flatter not yourself that thus they will always be. I need not mention the Uneasiness, which Sinners frequently feel within themselves, to themselves well known, not-with-

withstanding they labour to conceal and disguise it from the World. Poverty, Disgrace and Disease, the sure, if slow Attendants of Vice and Folly, shew the promised Felicity to have been not real, but imaginary. You need not be told, that this is the certain Condition of the Wicked. Let your Acquaintance with Mankind be ever so little, you must have both seen and known this to have been the unhappy Lot of many. Scarce can you walk abroad, but these sad and deplorable Objects are presenting themselves to your Sight. What you have seen then in others, do not want to experience in yourselves. If you follow the same bad Ways, you may expect to meet with the same Affliction and Distress.

You may imagine, that you shall never give up your Profession, and declare for Infidelity. Do not impose upon yourself; and act the Part of an Hypocrite; for you cannot be a Christian, unless you practise Christianity. Your Compliance with extenal Forms and Modes of Worship is only from a Regard to Decency, and to have the Reputation of an honest and good Man, as you find it necessary to promote your worldly

worldly Affairs; few, if any, tho' wicked, chusing to deal with those who are of bad Character, or do not put on the Appearance of Goodness. This Conduct, so long as the Vizard continues, may be of Service here, but will not entitle you to Happiness hereafter.

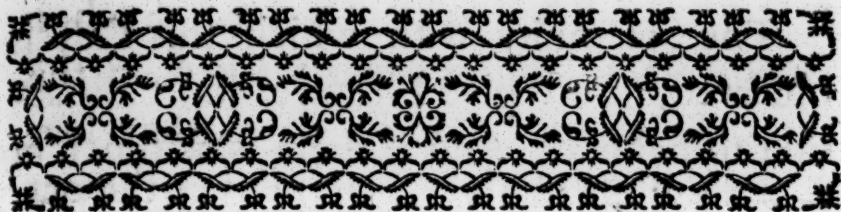
But why should you only affect to be the Christian? Why should you not be, in reality, what you profess you ought to be? Why should you put yourself to Inconveniences and Difficulties to conceal and disguise your Actions from public Notice? Why subject yourself to continual Fear and Uneasiness, lest your Hypocrisy should be detected? Why will you not endeavour to be, what you are so anxious and desirous of appearing? especially as you acknowledge it to be your Interest, and greatly to your Prejudice if you are not.

In short, as a Motive to be good, let me observe, that your Vices are expensive; that you cannot promise yourself more than a momentary Enjoyment of them; that they are not to be enjoyed, but at the Expence both of Health and Fortune; that they tend to the Ruin of the Constitution both of Body and Mind; and for the

the Pleasure of a few Years you will live the Remainder of your Days in Trouble or Sorrow, Poverty or Disease. Such is the miserable State of the wicked in this Life; worse in the next, if, as they live, they die impenitent. May neither the one nor the other be your Lot.



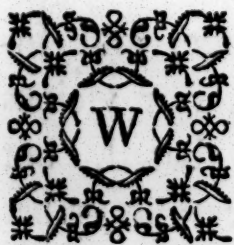
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A FAST SERMON *on the*
11th of FEBRUARY, 1757.

I. SAMUEL ii. 30.

“ For them that honour me, I will honour ;
“ and they that despise me, shall be
“ lightly esteemed.”



WE are this Day met according
to the Royal Appointment.
The design of our Meeting is
to implore the Divine Aid and
Protection, and to avert the
divine Wrath and Displeasure. The Ne-
cessity of it at this Time, is the bad Situa-
tion of our Affairs, and our numberless
Vices and Impieties, which may justly alarm
our Fears, as they seem to have rendered

us

us Objects rather of Vengeance, than of Favour.

The Solemnity with which this Fast is observed, must give Pleasure and Satisfaction to behold. And if there is as much of inward Sincerity, as outward Appearance; as much of Piety, as Devotion; if when our Hands and Eyes are in our Prayers uplifted to Heaven, our Hearts accompany; if our Repentance here, will be succeeded by a Reformation of Manners hereafter; if when we quit this sacred Place, we do not forget the Promises now made, and leave our Goodness behind us; then the present Meeting will prove a Blessing to us. But if from a Regard to Decency only, we abstain from Folly and Vanity for a Day; if when this Day is finished, we return again to our old Ways; if Luxury, Extravagance, and Intemperance still continue, and our vicious Passions and Desires are not abated, but urge us on to unlawful Gratifications, what can we expect will be the End of such Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, but Infamy and Ruin?

But of you, my Brethren, we hope better Things. We have Reason to believe from your Attendance at other Times, that you have not now assembled yourselves in
Obe-

Obedience to one Part of the Royal Edict, without any Intention of performing the other, *of becoming better Men*. And if we are in Want of the Assistance of Heaven, and want it we should, if we had a less powerful Adversary to deal with, this is the only Method to be pursued to procure it. We have known and sensibly felt, that it is not in our Power to command Success; but let us by a Return to Virtue deserve it. Then if Misfortunes happen, it will be a comfortable Reflection, that they are not the Effect of our Follies, brought upon us by a justly incensed Deity: Then though the first Events of War have proved unsuccessful, the Issue of it may be prosperous; then Peace and Plenty may again visit this once happy Isle, the horrid Noise of War, and the piteous Complaints of Want cease.

You may here ask, do you speak seriously? Are we really in an alarming and dangerous Situation? If you form a Judgment of the Times from the general Behaviour of the People, you might indeed doubt. For do we abate any Thing of our publick Diversions and Entertainments? Does not the Wine still sparkle at our Feasts? Have the Instruments of Musick ceased from playing? Is the Voice of the Singers no more heard;
or

or are the Feet of the Dancers still? Are the Comic Scenes shut up, whilst the Tragedy of War is acting over Europe? Are Religious Assemblies, the Schools of Piety, more frequented, and publick Houses, the Places of Riot and Intemperance, the Bane of Industry, the Ruin of Families, less resorted to? Do not Folly and Extravagance reign as much now, as in the Time of the most profound Peace?

Is it not shameful and dishonourable to hear the perpetual Murmurings of the People against the heavy Load of Taxes, and the additional Weight of more, now necessary for the Support and carrying on the War, and to see them, how lavish, how profuse in every Thing, that may administer Pleasure, sooth and flatter their Pride and Vanity?

We make our Boast of Liberty, and justly. If we have a real Value for it, let us at least for a Time lay aside our Pleasures, and appropriate a Part of the immense Sums they consume in the Support and Preservation of it. The contrary Behaviour shews us to be little better than Fools or Madmen; to be no longer worthy of being free; and fit only for those Shackles, which
the

the Enemy, we lately imagined, were preparing for us.

How unlike to the noble Spirit of the Roman Matrons, who, when their Country was engaged in an expensive War and in great Distress for Money, cheerfully and voluntarily presented the State with their Jewels, and most valuable Ornaments. Oh! that such a Spirit reigned amongst us; that we had such a just and high Sense of the Liberty we enjoy, as to convert Pomp, Splendor, Magnificence, Equipage and Dress to the public Use, when it wants all that we can give; when we have Enemies at home, not less dangerous than those abroad: The Designs of both being equally fatal to the Cause of Liberty.

When we see Persons at this Time making a splendid Appearance, it must remind us of the Behaviour of the Emperor Nero, who was pleased and delighted, when he saw the City of Rome on Fire. Do not such seem ready to grace the Triumph of the Conqueror, who are now unwilling to lend Assistance, and take Pleasure when their Country is in Affliction and Distress? With what just Indignation must every true Lover of his Country see the Rich and Powerful lolling in their gilded Chariots at
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Ease, revelling and banquetting, faring elegantly and sumptuously every Day, at a Time when the Poor is perishing for Want; the industrious Artizan and Labourer hardly procuring a bare Support for his necessitous Family; when we are threatened with the Sword from abroad, and a Famine at home; when our Arms have been unsuccessfully employed, and our Councils are distracted and disconcerted by the Spirit of Faction and Malevolence; when through Neglect or Imprudence we have become a Scorn and Derision to our Neighbours; our Name once respected and esteemed, now insulted and despised; and Britons, once eminent for their Piety, their Virtue, their Valour, are distinguishing themselves from other Nations by Impiety, Immorality, Cowardice. But if Folly and Extravagance prevail amongst the Great, how much do they abound amongst those of inferior Rank? If criminal in the one, how much more in the other? as they have less Support; and not only bring Distress and Misery upon themselves, but involve an innocent Family in the unhappy Consequences.

That a Reformation of Manners is wanted, the little Appearance of Virtue shews: A Reformation which all good and
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pious Men wish to see soon accomplished, for the Honour of God and the Prosperity of their Country : Unless a due Attention is paid to the former in the Practice of the Duties of Religion, we cannot promise ourselves a long Enjoyment of the latter.

God has expressly declared, that those who honour him, he will honour, and those who despise him, shall be lightly esteemed. This Declaration has been remarkably exemplified in the utter Ruin and Destruction of Nations, greater and more powerful than ours ; whose Foundation seemed to have been so immoveably fixed, as neither to fear, nor expect their Dissolution. What Security then have we against the same unhappy Event ? Are we more pious, more virtuous, more honest ? We have Reason to believe the contrary. If they suffered for their Wickedness, how shall we escape ? Not by continuing in vicious Practices, but by Repentance and Amendment of Life ? without which there can be no Safety nor Security : It is weak to think of, or expect it. Then we may be confident, but not now ; for we are far from being good ; happy for us if our Wickedness is not so great, as to have made our Dissolution nearer than imagined. To prevent it we have Time. The

Power is lodged in ourselves. A good Life will recommend us to the divine Favour and Protection. The Reasons why you should so live, it is needless to mention, for you know them; private Happiness, the Honour of Religion, the Welfare of your Country demand and depend upon it.

It is impossible, therefore it would be Presumption for any one to determine, when a Nation is so wicked as to be an Object of divine Vengeance; that is a Secret to all but Omniscience, and those to whom God in a special Manner reveals it. But by comparing the Manners of the present with former Times, a reasonable Conjecture may be formed. If then there was now more of Virtue and less of Vice; more Piety and less Hypocrisy; more Honesty and less Fraud; more of Frugality and Temperance and less of Luxury and Extravagance, we should be entirely free from any such terrible Apprehension.

As no Events can happen without the Knowledge and Permission of the Supreme Being, and as he punishes national Wickedness by Disappointments and Misfortunes, may we not, free from Superstition and Weakness, impute our past Losses and Miscarriages to the divine Displeasure? For
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though we cannot certainly say, that our Vices have been the Cause, yet of this, I think, we may be confident, that we are not so good, as to merit any extraordinary Interposition in our Favour. How little we honour God, and therefore how little we deserve to be honoured by him, let our Impiety, our Prophaneness and Intemperance, (which last Vice daily increases, notwithstanding the salutary Laws made, as appears from the Increase of the Distillery, and the vast Consumption of spirituous Liquors) let these Vices, with many others, commonly practised, publicly known, be a Testimony of our Merit.

If God then will only shew Favour to those, who observe and practise his Laws ; if we really stand in need of, and by our Virtues we may procure it ; if by the contrary Behaviour we shall not only forfeit it, but incur the divine Displeasure, what shall I say to influence you to the Performance of your Duty ? Your Presence here shews, that you are fully convinced of the Obligation to perform it, and of the Necessity at this Time to act with Sincerity. Have you a Regard for the Welfare and Prosperity of your Country ? I am persuaded you must have. That it may be happy and prospe-

rous, be you honest and good; encourage others to be so by your own Example, and bestow your Favours only upon those who are.

What Motive can be used to persuade the Wicked to repent, which they themselves are not acquainted with? For we live in an Age, when Men are more wise than good; when they do not want so much to be informed of their Duty, as to practise it; that being so plainly revealed, that few, if any, can be ignorant of it. Shall I urge Repentance as a Duty? They acknowledge it. Shall I say, that they cannot be happy without it? They have experienced its Truth. Shall I set before them the Vengeance of God exercised upon sinful Nations? They know it. Shall I tell them, that such may be the Fate of this Kingdom? They believe it. Shall I press a Return to Virtue and Goodness as the only Way of preventing it? They allow it. Shall I display the unhappy Consequence of Sin in the next Life? They know and dread it.

What then shall we say to provoke them to be good? If the Sense of their own Miseries cannot prevail, what Influence can Religion, or the public Good be supposed to

to have? Shall I mention the present afflicted State of their Country, groaning under the Weight of Taxes, engaged in an expensive and dangerous War, rent and torn by intestine Feuds and Contentions? Can they see their Country, for the Preservation of which the Blood of their Ancestors was so profusely, but not ignobly, shed, thus exposed and distressed? Can they suffer the Purity and Simplicity of their Religion to be again corrupted and adulterated by Romish Idolatry and Superstition, for the Defence of which the Fires were so often kindled, and Smithfield so often smoaked with human Sacrifices, the Sport of blind Zeal, the Feast of Popish Cruelty? Should not the Sense of these alarming and impending Dangers raise in us a just Indignation against the Enemies of our happy Constitution? Should we not, from a Sense of the invaluable Blessings enjoyed by it, roused and animated by the noble Examples of our Ancestors, resolutely maintain and defend our Rights, our Property, our Liberty, our Religion, or else greatly fall? Should we not, to procure their martial Spirit, undaunted Courage and Resolution, the Protection of themselves, the Terror of their Enemies; should we not lay aside our Vices,

be in Union amongst ourselves, and in Friendship with God? Then let the Enemy invade, we shall be prepared to receive him; we may be alarmed, but not dismayed; and whatsoever the Event will be, we shall live or die a religious, a brave, a free People. But so long as we continue vicious, at Enmity with God, and at Variance with each other, every little Loss or Disappointment makes us uneasy; we are fearful, irresolute; we neither plan with Judgment nor execute with Vigour; and the Enemy is rather victorious through our own Foibles, Timidity and Dissentions, than by his Bravery, his Courage or Virtue.

I say not these Things to discourage, but to convince you, of what every one, who thinks seriously, is before-hand apprized and acknowledges, the Necessity and Usefulness of a Reformation of Manners; without which there can be no true Enjoyment of Life. All that Wealth, Power and Grandeur can give, will not make you happy, if your Conscience is defiled with Guilt. Your Actions to others may be unknown, but to yourself they can be no Secret. There, there you must feel Trouble and Uneasiness. You may conceal and disguise it from the World, but you cannot fly from yourself.

self. You can be no Stranger to what passes within. Pleasures may for a Time amuse, Business prevent, and Company divert Reflection; but when Pleasures have been enjoyed, Business is over, Company gone, and you alone, then serious Thoughts will obtrude themselves; you cannot avoid them. O Conscience, Conscience, how great thy Power over the Mind of Man! Happy those who are Strangers to thy Terrors.

All the Pleasure and Satisfaction received in the Practice of Vice (if that can be call'd Pleasure, which ends in Poverty and Disease, or that be deemed a Satisfaction, which is done in Disobedience to the divine Commands, and stamps Infamy and Disgrace on human Nature) all the Pleasure and Satisfaction received, will not equal the Uneasiness left upon the Mind. This the Wicked are conscious of; and though weak enough to commit those Actions, which bring it upon them, yet, after Commission, they must wish to be released from it, and confess that their whole Lives have been an alternate Scene of Pleasure and Pain, of Vanity and Vexation of Spirit. If not before, yet at the Time of their Dissolution they will acknowledge a Life of Virtue to be the only certain Way of acquiring true
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Happiness, and that he, who deviates from it, in Search after Happiness elsewhere, is bewildered in a Maze of Error and Confusion, which unavoidably terminates in Misery and Ruin.

If then the Practice of Virtue and Goodness is necessary to render us happy in private Life, it is equally necessary to promote and advance the Happiness of the Public. No State can long exist, which has banished Honesty and Religion out of it. It will be either divided against itself by Faction and Party, enslaved and oppressed by the Avarice and Ambition of domestic, or exposed to the Insolence and Depredation of foreign Enemies.

Permit me here to mention two principal Evils, which have too long subsisted with equal Prejudice to Religion and the State; and unless they are removed, in vain is a Reformation attempted, in vain shall we endeavour to be an happy and religious People: From them are most of our national Calamities, through them have Immorality and Irreligion gained ground. The Evils complained of, are Bribery and Corruption, and Party Spirit.

And first as to Bribery and Corruption. Is it not notorious to every one, that most
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of the Places of Profit and Trust have been shamefully disposed of to the highest Bidder? Have Preferments been made according to Merit and Ability? Have you not known many preferred through the Power of Faction, to strengthen the Interest of Party, or oblige Friends at the Expence of the Publick, and to the rejecting Strangers, though more deserving. Is there any Thing to be procured but by this wretched Mean? All cry out, inveigh and exclaim against it, yet how small the Number of those, who practise it not? Is there scarce a Place of the most trifling Profit, if of a publick Kind, but Threatenings are used, Promises made to gain Interest? How many Persons through Fear of losing, or the Hope of procuring Interest, have voted contrary to their private Sentiments, I might have said voted unjustly, contrary to their Conscience?

So general is this Vice, that an honest and good Man knows not how to solicit a Favour, and when procured, if he nicely examines into the Means, must with Reluctance accept of and enjoy it. Hence it is, that many Places are filled with Persons without Credit or without Ability. And when Credit and Ability are united, you will

will find that such Elections have generally proceeded from absolute Necessity, not Choice.

What Motives shall I make Use of to dissuade Men from a Vice so pernicious to the public good? We fear that all Advice is vain, from the open Manner in which Bribery has of late Years appeared; not as heretofore under the Mask of Friendship, but as a publick Bargain in both Giver and Receiver, without any Regard to Decency, any Sense of Shame, any Regard to Conscience: So that Electors will not vote, nor can the Candidates succeed, without a Bribe given before, or promised after the Election. So little of true Honour and Honesty reign amongst us.

What can be said to Men, who make a publick Sale of their Property, their Liberty, their Country; who sacrifice their Conscience, their Religion, all that is dear and valuable for a Morfel of Bread and a Cup of strong Drink? If the Sense of the Blessings they enjoy, cannot influence them to act like Men, like Englishmen, we must say that they deserve to lose them; such Wretches, for it is disgracing human Nature to call them Men, are fit only to be made Slaves, to be sold and betrayed by those,

those, whom they entrust with their Rights and Privileges.

Besides the Evil of Bribery and Corruption, there is another not less destructive to the Peace and Happiness of the Nation, I mean Party Spirit; by which Jealousies, Animosities, Hatred, Strife and Variance are encouraged, under the specious Pretence of serving our Country: How do Men of base Principles, and the most infamous Characters prosper, are highly esteemed and carested, only because they are loud and noisy in Defence of, or Opposition to Opinions, which they do not understand. They concur with all Measures, right or wrong; will labour to palliate, excuse, even defend the most palpable Villainy, rather than the Interest of their Party should suffer. From the same base Spirit it is, that we think all to be in the wrong, who differ from us; and that no one really and truly loves his Country but ourselves. Hence also we thwart and oppose the Designs of the contrary Party when good, lest they should be superior to us in Power, and thought capable of serving the Public better. Thus our Country is torn and rent asunder; most astonishing, almost incredible, by those who stile themselves its Friends!

Alas!

Alas! our Foes may be frugal of their Blood and Treasure; they need not attempt to invade us, nor need the Hand of the Almighty be stretched out against us to punish us for our Wickedness and Impiety; for if these private and domestic Contentions continue, we must, e're long, become an easy Prey to our Enemies, be an unhappy and miserable People, or like the Jews of old, we shall butcher and massacre each other.

It is now Time to lay aside these Party Differences (for the Support of which, what Miseries are there, which this Nation has not severely felt?) to have none other Name than that of Britons: A Name once terrible to the Enemy, but now contemptible thro' our Follies and Divisions. Let us then be at Union amongst ourselves. Let the good Man, whosoever he is, be encouraged; the bad, let neither his Wealth nor Power screen and protect him, be punished; it is not the Time for trifling. Let us not, when our Country wants all the Assistance we can give it by the Steadiness and Unanimity of our Councils, as well as Conduct and Courage, let us not be divided, nor oppose; nor counter-act the Designs of those Persons, who are acting for the public Good, because

cause of a different Party. It should not be any Concern to us what they are, so long as they continue to act well. What Matter is it by whom the Public is served, if it is served? I think there can be no greater Proof of a base and mean Soul than this; when Men cannot blame the Conduct of Persons in Power, they should endeavour to asperse and vilify Characters by them inimitable, and bestow upon them the invidious Appellation of Whig or Tory, in order to render them odious to the Public, raise and encourage Suspensions that the serving of the People is the Veil, through which they intend to gratify their Pride, their Vanity, or Ambition.

To conclude,

If we are really affected with the unhappy Situation of our Country; if we are desirous of reviving its ancient Grandeur and Power; let us heartily and sincerely repent, in order to procure the divine Favour, of our manifold Sins and Iniquities; let us discountenance Bribery and Corruption; let us disdain a Bribe ourselves, and endeavour to have the Laws executed against those, who are base enough to accept it; let us know of no Distinctions amongst

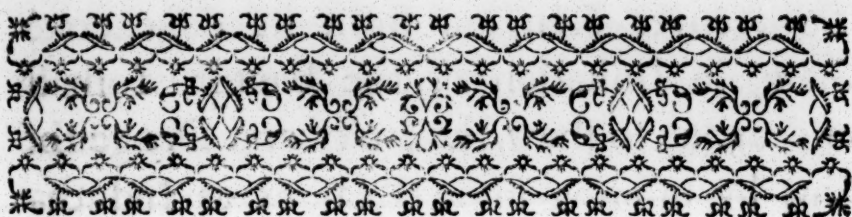
mongst us; let Party Names and Differences, civil and religious, be for ever buried in Oblivion.

If you are met here with Resolutions of Amendment, you will act agreeably to the Advice now given. I am persuaded that you are convinced of the Necessity of it, and therefore let us pray God, that from this Time our national Sins and Grievances be every Day lessened, till we become an happy and religious People.



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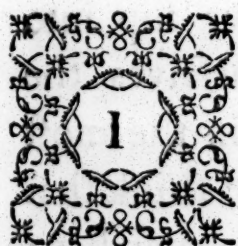
The



The Third Sunday in ADVENT.

St. MATTHEW, CHAP. iii. V. 2.

“ Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven
“ is at hand.”



It was the peculiar Designation of John the Baptist to exhort the Jews, who had little more than the Form of Religion, to repent of their Dissimulation and correct their Manners, that they might be thereby prepared for a worthy Reception of Christ's Doctrine, and so become entitled to the Benefits of his Passion. Exhortations to Repentance are not less useful and necessary now, than they were at that Time. Christians practise as little of the Gospel, as the Jews did of the Law. As they had but few of the Virtues, for which their Ancestors the Patriarchs were emi-

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nent,

nent, so we are but little troubled with the Piety, that adorned the primitive Christians. To recover Religion from its degenerate State, in Imitation of the Baptist, I shall endeavour to shew the Folly and Danger of Sin, by offering some Reasons as Inducements to perform the important Work of Repentance.

The first is, That we are mortal. We must die, though we know not when. Small is the Space between us and the Grave. As soon as we begin to be, we begin not to be. Every Hour draws nearer the Period of Existence, and we scarce know, what Time is, before we slip into Eternity. When we count ourselves the most secure, we are oftentimes in the most imminent Danger; and when we think that we have many Years to live, we may have but a Day, an Hour, not a Moment: So precarious and uncertain is Life, that nothing can ensure its Continuance for the shortest Term. Instances of sudden Death are frequent and alarming. Can we then begin the Duty of Repentance too soon? May we not from the Variety of Accidents unknown and unexpected, to which we are exposed, be deprived of the Power, unless we embrace the present Opportunity?

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For he that proposes so soon to repent as Tomorrow, has no Security that he shall live till Night. Many have been thus deceived, who had promised themselves a long Enjoyment of Life. The same Fate may attend us; there is no guarding against it. Is it not then imprudent to run the Risk, when the Consequence is of such Importance? Happiness or Misery, not finite, but eternal, is the unavoidable Lot hereafter. Granting, that but one in a thousand thus dies, yet is it not safe for you to delay Repentance, unless you could be assured of an Impossibility, that you shall not be that Person. This Instant of Time call your own; the next may be the Grave's: Therefore to die prepared, prepared you must live.

If your Warning is not so short, yet it may be too short to perform a necessary and satisfactory Repentance. Conversion is not to be wrought in a Moment. The Sinner cannot immediately become the Saint. A perfect no more than a vicious Character is to be completed in a Day. Vices, like ill Weeds, are with Difficulty rooted up. The Soil must be well manured and cultivated, before the Seeds of Virtue can be properly and successfully sown. Religion is not the Business of a few Hours, but of the whole

Life. Piety is not less incumbent upon Youth to practise, than old Age, nor Devotion of less Concern in Health, than when afflicted with Sickness. A Death-bed is an unfit Time for the Practice of Piety and Devotion: The Grief and Sorrow of those around us, the Violence of the Disorder and Disease laboured under, the Agony and Torture of a guilty Conscience, the Fears, the Hopes, the Terrors, which will accompany us in that unhappy Situation, must necessarily discompose and disorder the Mind. But allowing the Case to be different, what Reason have we for believing, that we, who neglect those Duties till that Period, shall, by such an Observance, merit Acceptance and obtain the Pardon of our Sins? For is there any Virtue in giving up those Vices, which we cannot retain, have lost the Sense of relishing, or are deprived of the Power of enjoying? Is a Compliance with the divine Commands to be accounted Piety, when it proceeds from an absolute Necessity; when we cannot, if willing, transgress them? What Goodness to abstain from Sins, at a Time when we cannot, tho' the Opportunity should be favourable, indulge ourselves in them? Is not the Life of the Christian to be wholly spent in the Service

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vice of God? What vain Hopes of Happiness then must he entertain, who having sacrificed his Health and Strength to his Lusts, has kept in Reserve the very Dregs of his Days for the Honour of his Creator? Such Persons as this love God, because they fear him; and dare not, though they have lived, to die wickedly. What Treatment such a Repentance will meet with in the next World, it would be Presumption to determine. We wish that the Sinner's Expectations may be answered by it, but would advise him not to rest his future Happiness upon such a weak and dangerous Foundation, which is inconsistent with his own Reason, and seems to be unwarranted by Scripture. But even supposing, what we cannot be sure of, that such a light and forced Repentance as this should be satisfactory; can they promise themselves, that a sudden Death, so common of late, shall not deprive them of the Means, or that an unexpected Calamity and Accident (of which there are many and various) shall not instantly disorder the Mind, and render them incapable of performing it? These Considerations often thought of and seriously considered, might render us superior to any dangerous Temp-

tation, at least would prevent us from running such a Length in Sin, as upon Reflection might make us despair of obtaining Mercy, and render Repentance useless.

Not less weak and ridiculous is the Behaviour of those, who proceed in a constant Alternative of sinning and repenting; who for every Offence drop a penitential Tear, and imagine that God must forgive, when they are pleased to intercede for Forgiveness. Such may go on in this trifling Manner, in sinning and repenting, till they can sin and repent no longer: And what will then be their Lot? Christian Charity indeed forbids us to say, that they are miserable; yet we may venture to affirm, that their Condition cannot be the best, nor the safest. Such a Conduct seems to be an exact Imitation of the ancient Jews, who in the Time of the Prophet Elijah mixed sacred with profane Worship, and offered the same Adoration to them, who were no Gods, as to the true and living God: It is compounding the Matter between God and our Lusts, as doubting whom it was best to serve: It is nicely copying after the Example of Judas, whose Heart was divided between Duty and Interest; who pretended to have a great Value for his Master, at the very Instant

stant he betrayed him: Whose fatal End may read an useful Lesson of Instruction to those, who are guilty of the same Dissimulation; who think it sufficient to serve Christ by Fits and Starts; are all Heats and Colds as it suits their Purposes, and imagine that they live and die very good, because they do not live and die very wicked.

A second Motive to Repentance is, that a Day of Retribution will come; that we die to live, and only change this World for another. The present is preparatory to another State; wherein our Actions here will be productive of everlasting Happiness or Misery. As there is no escaping Death here, so there will be no doing Justice hereafter. If then we chuse to be happy, we must endeavour to be innocent; if guilty, Misery is the Portion: For Salvation cannot be conferred upon those, who seek not after, and set no Value on it.

It is not more our Duty, than it is our Interest to practise Religion: For if false, it can be of no Prejudice to us hereafter; but if true, its Reward is inestimably great. Supposing a future State to be barely probable, which all allow it to be; (for it is equally as certain that I shall exist, as that I shall not exist hereafter, and he that doubts of it, can never be satisfied till he is

dead) Prudence even in this dubious Case obliges me to subscribe to that Opinion, which has the least Danger in it, and will turn out greatly to my Advantage, if true. There is this Comfort and Consolation in it, that at the worst, if there should be nothing hereafter, by acting agreeably to Duty, we have lived like Men, if we fall like Beasts ; but if there should, by omitting it, we have not only played the Fool in this, but made ourselves miserable in the next World.

That we were designed for something more than a mere Existence here, is an Opinion consistent with Reason : If otherwise, Man, who is made capable of greater Degrees of Happiness than any Being in this World, would be the most unhappy Being in it ; since every other Thing that has Existence enjoys, what he cannot now arrive at, the Perfection of its Nature. Perfect Happiness is not to be obtained by him. No one has been, is now, or ever will be free from Trouble, Disquiet and Uneasiness. Name or point out the Man, however well circumstanced in Life, however affluent his Fortune, however extensive his Power, however generous in the Distribution of the one, impartial, just and humane in the Administration of the other ;
such

such a one sure, if any one can be, is happy? But he will not say, that he is without his Troubles, the Portion of all the Sons of Adam. But can it be thought, that God made us to be miserable? No. Can Happiness be obtained here? No. There will then be another State, wherein that Happiness will be enjoyed. Life, without something future, would not be worth the Possession.

But if a future Existence is uncertain, it may be urged as a Weakness to quit the Enjoyment of those Pleasures, which are certain, for an imaginary Fear of Punishment. Let us not be so much the Enemies to our own Good, as to put the Cheat upon ourselves; for all this is but fancied Happiness; sensual Pleasures yielding but a momentary Satisfaction; frequently expiring in Pain, Disease, Poverty or Contempt. The Acquisition is not less uncertain, than the Possession short. A numberless Variety of Incidents occur to retard, obstruct and prevent the Fruition of our Desires. A Man must take great Pains to make himself miserable; he may at the last be disappointed, even when he thinks himself the most secure of obtaining his Views. What then is it but giving up one Uncertainty in Reversion for another? Which ought
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to have the Lead, let common Sense determine; for in the latter, if mistaken, we cannot be miserable, and if in the right, we must be happy; but in the former we may not only be baffled in the Pursuit of our Prey, but when caught, the Relish nauseates, the Appetite is palled, and our Fondness soon changed into an Aversion.

The above Plea, plausible as it may seem to be in Youth, is absurd in old Age. They can only doat and dream of those visionary Scenes of Pleasure, which they cannot partake of. The short Time they have to live, and the Infirmities they labour under, which render a Gratification of their vicious Passions impracticable, should be a Kind of Monitor to them, to think of preparing and providing for another State, if precarious. But a future State is not so uncertain, if any Credit may be given to divine Truth. Scripture is so full, clear and express to the Point, that it leaves even Ignorance without Excuse. It effectually removes all Doubts, dissipates all Fears, strengthens and confirms all our Hopes in Regard to this important Truth.

When Friends forsake, Riches fail, Pleasures become insipid, and Life seems tedious and burdensome, then Religion comforts
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and supports the good Man; then Guilt and Reflection fill the Minds of the wicked with Dread and Terror. Add to all these Misfortunes, Pain, Sicknefs, Death. What Consolation do the Good find at the last solemn and awful Hour? What Doubts, Fears, what Agonies assault and trouble the Wicked, when no Hopes of Life remain, when Art and Medicine are uselefs and unnecessary? He then sees the Folly and Weaknefs of Sin; he suspects Futurity; he imagines it to be possible; even looks upon it to be probable; he hopes, he wishes, he desires it may prove a Lie; he dreads, he fears and imagines it may be true, and dies. Is Vice then less than Madnefs? Will a Man venture his future Happinefs upon a mere Possibility? Will he expose himself to future Misery, because it may be possible, even probable, that there will be no future State? Consult your Reason, look into common Life, and you will find and account those to be the most prudent and discreet, who guard against, so far as they are able, every Inconvenience and Danger even in Appearance, though they may never happen. Shall Men shew so much Prudence and Discretion in Temporal Things, whose Possession and Enjoyment are momentary, and appear negligent
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and unconcerned about Futurity? Especially when they acknowledge, that if there should be a future Existence, they must be miserable in it; and allow that the Arguments offered in Favour of it are more in Number, more reasonable, powerful and just, than any that have been produced against it. It is not the Offspring of Revelation, but the Voice of Nature, of Reason, and of every Man's Conscience. The Thoughts of it may be diverted, the Fears of it stifled, but its Truth cannot be denied, nor its Falshood proved. The best, the greatest, the wisest have in all Ages believed and maintained it; the wicked, the foolish, the unjust have always dreaded and feared it.

A Third Motive to Repentance is, that the Conditions upon which our future Happiness is to depend, are easy to be complied with. More favourable they could not have been, had we framed and devised them. Perfect Obedience is not expected, that being what in this imperfect State, can never, if aimed at, be attained. What can be done, is exacted; more than that is not required.

Religion does not deny us the Use of any Thing; and the Practice of it will make us as happy as we can be in this present Situation. What can a reasonable Being wish
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for or desire more? The Precepts it lays down for our moral Conduct are few and comprehensive; not less suited to the Weakness of our Nature, than fit to exalt it by Degrees to that Perfection, which it is hereafter to receive. If we are willing, we shall find no great Difficulty in the Performance: so that there is more Occasion to admire the Gentleness, than complain of the Severity of Religion; more Reason to celebrate the Supreme Being, for the Lenity and Mildness with which he treats us, than to murmur and repine, as if, like the Ægyptian Task-masters, he had expected Impossibilities.

Cannot a Man be happy, if he is religious? Must he then give up all the Comforts and Enjoyments of this Life? Must he retire to the Desert, or be shut up in a Convent? May he not please, though not indulge his Senses? May he not amuse, divert and entertain himself? Is he deprived of the Liberty of any Thing worth enjoying, or prohibited any Enjoyment, which does not tend to debauch the Mind, or injure the Constitution? And are such Prohibitions unjust or unreasonable, which prevent us from becoming mean, little, and contemptible? For he that drinks away his
Sub-

Substance, squanders it away upon a Mistress, or throws it away at a gaming Table, what does he acquire by these Fooleries, but Poverty, Disease, or Discontent? Would we then live comfortably here, and be happy hereafter? Let us be faithful and diligent in the Discharge of the Duties of Religion, and make the Scripture the Rule of our Actions; if not for its own Excellency, yet for our own Interest: For it is that alone, which gives the true Relish to all the Enjoyments of Life, and by that alone we are enabled to bear up against the Calamities of it. What Anxieties are there, which it cannot soften? What Misfortunes which it cannot support us under? What Difficulties, which it cannot enable us to surmount? Why then do Men flight and neglect it? Why should they not be fond of being religious, when they are desirous of being so reputed? When they study so to appear, if they are not; when they commend and applaud those who are; when they will neither trust nor put any Confidence in those who are not; when they are ashamed of their Follies, and labour to conceal them; and when they publicly inveigh against, censure and condemn those Vices of which they are privately guilty.

There

There is not any Thing so valuable as the Possession of a pure Conscience; first or last it will be found the principal Good, and to have been the Object the most worthy of our Pursuit. When Sickness comes, then the Vanity of those Things, in the Purchase of which we placed our Happiness, immediately shews itself; Things then appear what they really are; and we can look down with Disdain and Contempt upon the darling Pomp, Splendor and Pleasure of the World; be surpris'd that we should have mistaken our truest Good, in courting such empty Greatness, and think it scarcely credible, that we should have been amused into our Ruin by mere Trifles. As much might be learnt, if seriously disposed, before Experience has fatally convinced us of its Truth. It will then be too late to despise what we have no Property in; and it is an unhappy Reflection, that must produce Pain and Misery with it.

The last Motive to Repentance is, that Vice, however varied and agreeable it may be, is at the best a gilded Poison, a bitter Sweet. It may yield Pleasure for a Time, but when the Passion has been gratified, it is surfeited, and an inward Uneasiness is left behind. What Caution, what Care, what

Circum-

Circumspection is required to practise it, lest a Reputation be sullied, if not lost, by a Discovery ! Though practised in the most secret Manner, in Places the most distant from our Habitation, the least frequented by our Acquaintance, and the most retired from publick Notice, how jealous and suspicious, how fearful and uneasy, lest we should be known to any, our Hypocrisy detected, and our Character ruined. These, though great, are not the only Terrors that assault and trouble the guilty Mind. The Apprehension of something hereafter does not a little terrify us, even in the Midst of our Enjoyments. We cannot but fear a Hell, when acting as if there was none ; and dread the divine Vengeance, at the same Instant we offend his Goodness.

Vice does not only exhibit a dismal Prospect hereafter, but has its Evils even in this Life ; for it is not to be enjoyed without the Expence of Time, Health and Fortune. Can any one be a Stranger to the Misery and Distress, which Vice, sooner or later, constantly rewards her Votaries with ? Can any one be ignorant of the Poverty and Want, the Shame and Contempt, the Infamy and Disgrace, which a too free Indulgence of the Passions occasions ? Have
you

you not seen these unhappy Effects in others? Have not many experienced them in themselves? It is, indeed, true, that we may practise Vice with Security and little Inconvenience; but it must not be expected, that thus it will always be, as at the first. If not in the Strength of Youth, yet in the Infirmary of old Age we shall sensibly feel the Consequences, which flow from it. This Observation is verified by living Examples, by what you may daily see: From whence come Dropsies, Consumptions, Gout, Inflammations, &c.? Come they not principally from Intemperance? Are not the Seeds of these Diseases sown in our youthful Days? So that if we escape Death then, which Numbers do not, yet, at the last, when unable to bear Affliction, and mostly wanting Comfort, we shall then be afflicted most. This is now the unhappy Situation of many, and will be the Condition of all, who follow the same or any other Vice. So that if we gain nothing hereafter by being virtuous, yet we are certainly much the better for it here; if Health and Ease, Peace of Mind and a sound Constitution, may be reckoned Benefits.

To conclude,

As neither Strength nor Vigour of Constitution can ensure Life, but die we must, however unwilling to submit to the Stroke; as there is a set Day appointed, when we shall severally render an Account of our Behaviour here, and accordingly as we have observed or deviated from the divine Law given, we shall be rewarded or punished; since to be virtuous is to be happy, and to be vicious is to be miserable; since all the Enjoyments here, after a stated Term of Years, must either leave us or we them: As all these Things are unquestionably true, which even the Enemies of Revelation have so much Modesty, if they dispute, not to deny; Who, and where is he, that wants Motives to lead a good Life, or needs Persuasives to quit a bad one? Let a Man sit down and seriously meditate upon these Matters, and then let him be wicked, if he can. Gratitude to the Creator, Self-Interest, and what is held dearer than either, Self-Love, will powerfully engage the Affections. The genuine Source of Vice is Inconsiderateness; for no one that ever duly attended to the Nature and Consequence

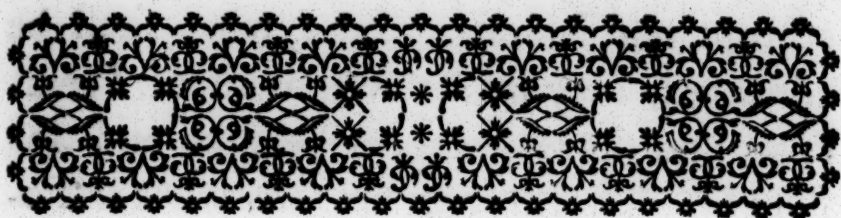
quence of Sin, could presumptuously offend. Let it then be our Care rightly to inform ourselves of our Duty, and we shall not only see the Folly of transgressing it in the Punishment annexed, but the Wisdom of obeying in the Reward it will confer.



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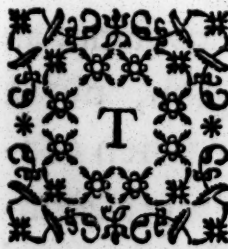
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The good and bad EFFECTS of
PLAYS.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. v. V. 6.

“ Let no Man deceive you with vain
“ Words.”

HE Use to be made of these Words will, I fear, meet with an unwelcome Reception. This at first was a Discouragement from writing upon a Subject, which, if necessary, would be disagreeable. It is, however, grave and serious, and therefore may deserve Attention: Though, if we have respect to the Manners of the Times, and the prevailing Taste of Gaiety and Pleasure, it will stand in need of an Apology to recommend it.

The Subject to be discussed, is the Tendency of bad Plays, to debauch, vitiate and corrupt our Morals. That what shall be advanced, may be received without Prejudice, and have a proper Weight and Influence, permit me to say somewhat in Favour of these Entertainments.

I am not of the Opinion, that it is criminal to be present, nor do I look upon it as a Virtue to be absent, when the Matter is good; neither is it a Sign of Guilt to be seen at a Playhouse, no more than it is a Proof of Holiness to be in a Church. A good Play is not only the most innocent Amusement, but the most instructive, most agreeable, and the most worthy of a rational Being. General Complaints against these or other publick Diversions, discover not an honest and just Zeal for Religion, but a Weakness of Understanding; for when conducted with Decency, and nothing is exhibited inconsistent with or offensive to good Sense and good Manners, they have their Uses: And if Abuses creep in, as undoubtedly they will, and do even in sacred Institutions, they should be corrected.

Though vicious Plays are acted, owing to a bad Taste in the Audience, not to the Fault of the Managers, are good Plays of
no

no Service? If our Morals may be injured by the former, will they not be improved by the latter? They were, originally, designed to inspire Men with a Love of Virtue, and an ardent Desire for noble and heroic Actions; to set forth the dark Intrigues of Vice, and lay open the false Pleasures, with which she is apt to delude and captivate the Innocent and Unwary. If the Design is not evidently calculated to answer these good Purposes, if performed, the Fault is in the Superintendant, who has full Power to restrain and prohibit them; though the Audience is not less criminal, whose Disapprobation would prevent a Repetition. But is not the Reverse of this true? The former will not exercise the Power he has of restraining, because the Scenes exhibited are agreeable to the reigning Taste and Humour of the Age, and the People cannot express a Dislike and Aversion, for what their Actions approve and commend. This Observation Facts evince to be true; for the more vicious and immoral the Play, the more crowded the Audience; and a good one is rather frequented for fear their Sense and Judgment should be questioned, than from a Delicacy of Taste.

A melancholy Proof of the Depravity and Corruption of the present Times!

If the Intention of the Plot was always to expose the Deformity of Vice, and to display the Beauty and Comeliness of Virtue; if it was to lay open the several deplorable Scenes of Wretchedness and Misery, in which the Passions, when indulged, are apt to involve Mankind, and to exhibit that Pleasure and Satisfaction, which constantly attend them, when duly regulated; if the Heroe's Virtues should be always rewarded, or their Vices, at the Conclusion, always meet with the deserved Punishment, nothing could be more admirably adapted or more contribute to render Vice odious and infamous, and Virtue lovely and amiable. We should then admire, and be influenced to practise the former, because it would plainly appear to be our Interest, and avoid the Commission of the latter, because it is not only unworthy of a reasonable Being, but evidently tends to make our Lives unhappy and miserable.

When we see Merit advanced, and the Worthless degraded; when Honour and Reward attend the one, Infamy and Disgrace the other; we should be naturally struck with a Desire of Imitation. Then
those

those who covet to be great, when they found it to be the most certain Way to Promotion, would endeavour to be good ; and not follow the little, mean, base Arts successfully practised in the Drama, and which have been, by those who have adhered to them out of it, too successfully practised.

If the Stage was thus managed, to see a Play would not be hurtful, nor prejudicial, but useful and beneficial to Society ; in instilling and recommending wholesome and salutary Precepts. Neither could it be of any Disadvantage to Religion, since it would act consistent with its Plan, in endeavouring to make Men wiser and better, by exposing Vice and Folly in such a Manner as to render them as ridiculous, as they ought to be contemptible. But if Gravity and Seriousness were introduced upon the Stage, if we may judge from the Manners of the Age, it would be as much deserted, as the Church now is. The Doors would not be thronged by a Multitude without, when nothing was to be seen or heard within to gratify, but to censure their Vanity ; nothing to humour, but to condemn their Follies.

This is not the present Situation of the Stage. Virtue frequently appears in the utmost Distress, and Vice prosperous ; Suc-
cess

cess attends the one, Misfortunes the other. The most fortunate are those of bad Morals, of worse Principles; and the good Man is often burlesqued and abused. In many Plays, the most shining Characters are Rakes and Debauchees. Chastity and Modesty introduced by the Poet, and represented by the Actor as Subjects fit only for Banter and Ridicule: And such Scenes of Lewdness, both in Word and Action, publicly exhibited, which Decency forbids me to mention, as can be only paralleled in a Stew. And yet such Scenes the Christian applauds; Scenes which would have made an Heathen blush and retire, are longed for and desired, yield Pleasure and Delight to the Christian; and what would have rendered an Actor infamous and odious in ancient Greece and Rome, is now his Merit.

Though an Audience, whose Morals are not entirely vitiated, cannot but compassionate the innocent unfortunate, yet this Tendernefs soon expires in the repeated Applauses of a lucky Profligate. Hence it is, that at present the Stage seems to be the Fountain of Immorality, where Virtue and Innocence are undermined. When Vice is richly arrayed; when Encomiums are bestowed

bestowed upon its Votaries, and the Actors publickly applauded by Persons of Distinction and Character, weak and incautious Youth are apt to imagine, that there is no such Odium in Vice as pretended; and to be the Friend of Virtue, is to be an Enemy to Politeness and Gallantry. Thus far in general to shew the Service or Disservice of the Stage to the Morals of the People: But to come to Particulars.

First, Concerning the Prophaneness of the Stage.

To hear how freely Oaths and Imprecations circulate, without any Horror in the Actor, and received with Indifference by the Audience, it might be justly suspected, that both have but little of the Awe and Veneration due to the sacred Name of God. When that sacred Name is thus publickly ridiculed, and introduced as a Sanction to every loose Expression and obscene Piece of Wit, that the Poet writes, does it not take off our Reverence towards the supreme Being, in making him approve what is mean and little in a Man to hear, see, speak or countenance. Is not this laying a Foundation for Atheism? For a vicious Deity is no better than the Creature of the Imagination.

Is

Is it not an Encouragement to Infidelity when Christians thus openly shew a Contempt of their Religion? Is not the Cause of Vice advanced, by removing the Fear of God in dishonouring his Name?

Secondly, Concerning the Lewdness of the Stage:

Which is of such Sort as no modest Person can sit to hear and see without just Offence, and cannot long retain their Innocence by frequenting Places, where Guilt appears in such gaudy and alluring Scenes, where to debauch and to be debauched, are esteemed Acts of Gallantry. Every one is sensible from Experience, that the Passions need no Provocatives; they are too susceptible of bad Impressions, more especially in Youth, in whose tender Minds the Seeds of Virtue lie scattered and confused; who are apt to be fond of every thing, which yields Pleasure, provokes Desire, or flatters their Foibles. Hence, by seeing and reading bad Plays, they are instructed, and soon become versed in the Arts of Intrigue; and what they publicly admire in the Drama, they afterwards practise in the Closet. For every Folly committed, they have from thence an Excuse, and think that
God

God will not condemn, what the Poet seems to approve.

Those Parts, where an Amour is in hand, are generally wrote too soft, and performed in such a Manner as to create, not allay Desire. The Poet in this may have displayed his Talent in the Study of Nature, but has not shewn his Delicacy in laying open its Weakness. That such Parts may not fail of procuring a kind Reception, Wit and Humour are not wanting. By this Means, and from the great Applause given, how many have been wrought upon to believe, that to play the Fool was Wisdom, and the Loss of Reputation Politeness? Hence it is, that we have so many Quixots amongst the Men, so many Cleopatra's amongst the Women. Hence it is, that the Youth of both Sexes are read in nothing but Plays and Romances, and their Conversation, like their Dress, appears to be made up of Fopperies and Trifles. Hence it is, by frequenting those Places, and reading such Books, that many have been easily seduced to give up their Virtue and Innocence, and afterwards, to support a wretched Life, have turned common Prostitutes: Their Gallants also are by their Extravagance compelled to follow as bad Courses,
till

till Death or the Law puts an End to the Distress and Misery of both.

Thirdly, Concerning the Ridicule of the Clergy.

When one of that Order is introduced, the Mimic appears more than ordinary grave, to excite a loud Laugh; and apes the Priest, to make the Character personated appear an Object rather of Derision than Esteem. The Poet wants not for Strokes of Satire to please the Audience; the Generality of which are fond of hearing and seeing those Characters railed at and ridiculed, which they cannot imitate. I might enlarge upon the Prejudices done to Religion by bringing such Persons on the Stage; the Contempt of the former generally producing an Indifference towards the latter; and Morality having but little Influence, when its Preachers are thus exposed to publick Scorn and Derision; not many having Discernment or being willing to distinguish the Difference of Times and Places, but the Generality imagining, that what the Priest appears upon the Stage, the same he is off; and thereby the whole Body is condemned for the Pride, the Insolence and Ambition of a few; though, I say, I might enlarge
upon

upon the Prejudices done to Religion, yet I forbear, lest I should be censured for Partiality in treating of Self. I shall only observe, the Truth of which all are Witnesses to, that the Times are not so good, but a Reformation of Manners would be useful, and seems to be necessary; yet the ungenerous and uncivil Treatment shewn to the inferior Clergy, upon whom this Business principally depends, must render Attempts of that Kind at best precarious, generally unsuccessful.

Fourthly, Most of the Plays exhibited tend to divest the Mind of serious Thoughts and make us forget ourselves.

Religion is represented frequently as a Subject fit only for the Contemplation of the Weak and Superstitious. Hence many learn to think of it with Indifference; and as the Rules of it oftentimes disagree with their Actions, Scruples are easily admitted and readily adopted, which end either in a Disregard or Contempt of its Authority. And when any thing from within troubles them, and grave serious Thoughts (which at some Intervals will steal upon them) make their Conscience uneasy, a theatrical Entertainment will remove the Burden, and
the

the superstitious Fears and Fancies, as they are termed, are for the present diverted. Every Thing there appears gay and brilliant, and if the gloomy Thoughts of Eternity sometimes attack them, they are speedily dissipated by an Air or a Catch.

Fifthly, The Stage begets in Youth Habits of Sloth and Idleness, makes them negligent in Business, and to support their Extravagance, not only to be too free with their Master's Time, but with the Goods and his Cash. This is done in order to appear with Advantage at a Playhouse; where they contract a Taste for Gaiety and Grandeur, immediately commence Gentlemen without Title or Purse to support it; where they are soon initiated by their new Acquaintance into the genteel and fashionable Vices of the Town, and shewn the Way of spending their Fortunes, before they are of Age to possess them, or taking up Money before they have by Labour and Industry acquired it; where they learn Discontent in their Station of Life, think that they deserve more Favours than they receive, and refuse to perform any Business, unless upon their own Terms, which, like their Pleasures, are unreasonable and extravagant.

Thus

Thus I have briefly shewn the Tendency of bad Plays to corrupt our Manners, and to lessen the Awe and Reverence due to Religion. The Complaints made may be remedied; but the vitiated Taste of the Audience must be first corrected, else all Attempts to remove them will be unsuccessful: For the Managers of the Theatres find it greatly for their Interest to exhibit what is bad, from the great Number who crowd to hear and see them. A Reformation would be of considerable Benefit to the Public; Vice would then be exposed, and the Cause of Virtue strengthened, which was the original Intention of Plays; and also to render those Crimes and Follies, against which the Law has made no Provision, ridiculous and contemptible.

To conclude,

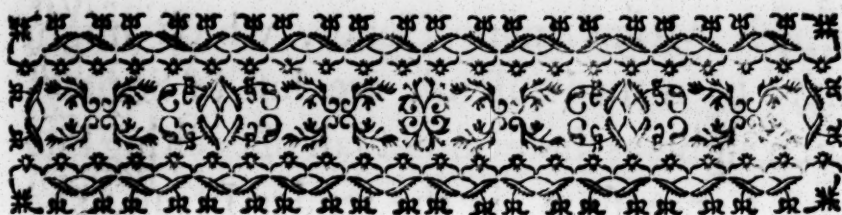
So long as our Entertainments and Diversions are innocent; so long as they are not injurious to our Morals, or prejudicial to the Interest of Religion; so long as they are not expensive and extravagant, such as our Fortunes, or the Wants of our Families will not admit; so long as they do not make us negligent in Business, or take us off from attending Matters of

Weight and Importance, it cannot be criminal to partake of, if it may be thought a Virtue to abstain from them. Your Virtue, your Religion, your temporal Happiness, your Family Good are in no Danger, provided those Consequences do not happen. That they may not, it is both your Duty and Interest to take Care.



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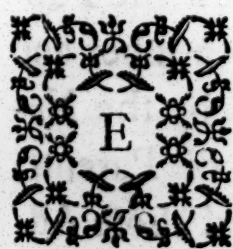
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A METHOD to prevent THEFT and ROBBERY.

EPHESIANS, CHAP. iv. V. 28.

“ Let him that stole, steal no more, but
“ rather let him labour, working with his
“ Hands the Thing which is good.”

VERY one, who reflects how much Fraud and Dishonesty prevail, and how ineffectual the Laws made to prevent those Practices have proved, must be affected with the Damages sustained by Society; and cannot be unconcerned at the Distress they bring upon the unhappy Aggressors. To see Numbers of our Fellow Creatures untimely taken off the Stage; and others, not a few, sent for Offences the most trivial into foreign Parts, from whence

not one in an hundred returns, and many die before, or soon after their Arrival, by which Means many Hands, which might have been made useful, are lost to Society; such Sights as these cannot fail of exciting Pity and Compassion, in the tender Breast, and every true Lover of his Country; whose Strength, Support and Riches depend upon the Increase, not Diminution, of its People. Let us condemn the Action, but be merciful to the Man; not exposing him to, nor inflicting a Punishment greater than his Crime has deserved.

How many have fallen a Sacrifice to the publick Resentment, who from their Infancy have been trained up to none other Maxim, than that of living upon the Publick? others from the Want of a sober and religious Education, occasioned by the Neglect, Poverty or Wickedness of Parents; and some indeed who having had those Advantages, which the others wanted, from an early Attachment to, and Perseverance in bad Courses, forgot to act like Men and Christians.

As few Persons are born without a Genius to something, so many of the unhappy Sufferers have been possessed of no mean Talents; and others would have appeared to

an equal Advantage, if they had been cultivated and improved by a suitable Education. Would it not then be better to consult the Inclination and Disposition of Criminals? Not cut them off from Society, but put them to such Employment to which they are by Temper and Genius adapted: The Want or Loss of which has been in many the principal Cause of Dishonesty; by which Appointment, with proper Care and Discipline, Virtue and Honesty would be instilled into them, and in Time they would yield much Good to Society.

Many Felonies deemed capital with us, in the Roman and Athenian Governments were treated with less Severity. The Parties injured were either to accept of a Restitution, if it could be made; or a Commutation, something of equal Value to be given; or if the injurious could neither restore nor produce an equivalent, some slight Punishment was to be inflicted, adequate to the Crime committed. To this it may be objected, that in former Ages Men were content with what they had, and therefore more honest: So that Laws in those Times useless, are now rendered necessary for the better Security of private Property, because few Men rest satisfied in the Station of Life

Providence has placed them, but either to gratify their Avarice or support unnecessary Expences, are guilty of private or open Fraud and Dishonesty.

But this is a mistaken Notion. The Cause of the Difference between the Moderns and Ancients seems to be this, Men were then more strict in the Observance of their Religion; Parents were diligent and careful to instruct their Children in the Rites, Ceremonies, Laws and Customs both civil and religious of their Country; the Rich did not oppress the Poor, but relieved and assisted them when in Distress and Want; and the natural or acquired Endowments of both were employed without any Regard to private Views, solely to advance the Publick Good and Welfare.

It was this Conduct, that ennobled Greece and Rome. When it ceased, then Liberty, Fame, Honesty and every social Virtue expired. Bribery, Corruption, Extortion, Oppression, and Rapine succeeded. The Rich were selfish, proud and insolent; the Poor turbulent and violent. Jealousy and Discontent reigned in every Person; and the publick Good became the Sanction both of the little and the great Villain. I do not say that we are in the same Condition.

But

But if the publick Good was made the publick Concern; if Men amassed Wealth, procured Power and courted Preferment, with the laudable View of being serviceable and beneficial to the Community, not to aggrandize Self, to make a Figure and Appearance in Life, and enjoy the Pleasures of it: If Superiors behaved in an affable and courteous Manner to their Inferiors, and Inferiors shewed a proper Respect to Superiors, and both practised and observed the Duties and Precepts of Religion more; our Country would not as now abound with Knaves and Thieves, nor would its Happiness and Welfare be sacrificed to the Pride, Avarice and Ambition of a few.

But pass we from the Pagan to the Jewish Polity; the Laws of which were framed and composed by the supreme Legislator; in which Capital Punishments were not ordained for any Felony; but according to the Injury done or received, Satisfaction was to be given or made by the Aggressor. Other Crimes which we are so weak or so wicked to treat with Indifference, as Adultery and Sabbath Breaking, were adjudged deserving of Death; Crimes these more displeasing and offensive in the Sight of God, than pilfering and stealing Trifles, and must so ap-

pear to Man, when he seriously reflects upon the unhappy Consequences, which they never fail of producing.

Will it be said, that the Jews were so honest as not to need Capital Punishments? Read their History, and they appear to have been a crafty, cheating and knavish People; And your own Experience will convince you, that the modern Jews have as little Honesty as their Forefathers. These are Acts extremely prejudicial to the Good of Society; which the Supreme Being would have provided against by Laws more rigorous and severe, if they had been just and necessary. And if nothing short of Death could have prevented Fraud, (though that Penalty has not answered the Intention of the Legislator,) that, it is probable, would have been ordained as the proper Punishment: But as such Punishment was not ordained, it may be reasonably concluded, that the Crime of Felony is not equal to such Severity; that no one can be so much injured in his Property as to be adequate to the Loss or Deprivation of Being.

You observe then that in the best of Governments, Human and Divine, this Punishment was not inflicted; yet in those States Fraud and Dishonesty were not unknown,

known, not unpractised. This Lenity, if it must not be called Justice, had a good Effect; for though private Property might have been more exposed, yet the Lives of the Possessors were safe and unhurt. But Death being fixed as the Penalty, not content with robbing or defrauding, for the Sake of Self-preservation they oftentimes commit Acts of Violence, and add to Theft, Murder.

As Death is more than an Equivalent for any Loss, since there is not any thing so dear and valuable as Life; and as it has not answered the Design of the Law in preventing Robberies, but has rather made Robbers more barbarous, cruel and desperate, suppose that some other Method should be tried.

The Apostle's Advice to those who have lived by Dishonesty is, that they should, by Labour and Industry, endeavour to procure a Subsistence: So it may be found upon Trial the most effectual Method to prevent or put a Stop to Robberies, at least to lessen the Frequency of them, by confining the Aggressors to hard Labour. And by a proper Application of Lenity or Severity as their Crimes or Behaviour require; by instructing them in the Principles of the Christian Religion,

gion, which many of these unhappy Persons are ignorant of or little acquainted with; by convincing them of the Folly and Weakness in forsaking a real for an imaginary Good; and by adding some little Encouragement to be virtuous and good, either by lessening the Portion of Labour assigned them, or a Trifle of Money, they might in Time be made useful Members of Society.

Of what Use these frequent Executions? Is private Property more safe? Are our Lives better secured? Are not the Dangers and Fears the same? Do their Frequency lessen the Number of Criminals? When one Head is taken off, do not two, like to what Report hath said of the fabulous Hydra, spring up? Have not the Goals been found too little to contain them, and our Plantations crowded with them? And if the daily Papers speak true, the various and numberless Cheats and Frauds, too successfully practised, shew, that these Grievances will not be speedily removed, if the same Methods are pursued.

It may be said, by these Executions, dangerous and hurtful Persons are removed from Society; such who have forfeited all Right of Protection, and are entitled to receive

ceive no Favour from it. Granting this to be true; May they not in Time be of more Service, than they have been of Prejudice, if these sanguinary and cruel Methods were laid aside? When brought to a Conviction of their Folly, and made sensible of the Duty and Advantage of a virtuous and industrious Life, might not their Hands, now mischievous, be useful in the Improvement of our Manufactures; or if no Genius for those Arts, might they not strengthen and mann our Fleets and Armies?

It may be said, that to build a Place for the Reception of Criminals and the Purpose of Labour, would be attended with considerable Expence, and no small Sum would be required for their daily Support and Maintenance. It is acknowledged. But in Time the Expence would be reimbursed, and they would, from the Profits arising from their Labour, be soon in a Capacity of maintaining themselves. The Expence, however, can be no just and reasonable Exception against the Design; for the Benefit Society would receive by the Execution of it, would be greatly superior to it; since our Lives, Fortunes and Properties would be more secure and free from Danger.

To

To this it may be objected, that they have contracted such an Habit of Idleness, (the pretended, not real Cause of Knavery and Dishonesty) that they would be averse to Work and Labour. But this is a mistaken Notion; for Man is an active and restless Spirit: And these Persons have as great a Dislike and Aversion to an idle Life, as we could wish or desire them to have. It is for want of constant Employment, and being unable to continue long out of Action, that they form, contrive and execute Schemes of Fraud and Violence. Is it not the frequent Complaint of these unhappy Persons, that if they could have been constantly employed, they might have escaped an untimely End? Does it not, therefore, seem probable, that many would, if such a Scheme should take Place, be preserved from Ruin? and others, but lately initiated into these bad Arts, would be glad of quitting them on such Conditions; which now, for fear of Detection, they cannot, cannot live honestly and soberly, because their Characters being bad, no one chuses to trust or put any Confidence in them: A Condition which merits Pity and Compassion. Hard Lot indeed! when they would, but dare not be honest; when disposed and inclined

to turn out of the Road of Vice, they are under an absolute Necessity of directly travelling on, till the Law over-takes and cuts them off. An affecting Account this; but more affecting, when we recollect, that many of those who have suffered the Severity of the Law, by contracting an Intimacy, though ignorantly, with loose Company, have been, when in Liquor, drawn into the Commission of Crimes, which, when committed, for their own Safety and Security, they were obliged ever after to follow and practise.

But besides this good Effect upon Persons already engaged in these infamous Practices, many, now wavering, would be prevented from entering into them: And the Loose, Idle and Disorderly would become virtuous and industrious, when they perceived, that they should be constrained and compelled so to be: If not from a Principle of Goodness, yet from a Dread and Fear, lest they should be forced to do more Work, than they would willingly chuse; receive no Benefit and Advantage from it; be kept in close Confinement and live hard.

Need it be asked; Has the Manner of punishing Criminals any thing terrible? Is it more than a momentary Pain? Scarce
sensible

sensible to the unhappy Sufferer. Is not the Shame soon over? Hence Men are not disheartened nor afraid to commit such Actions, as must, when discovered, expose them to the ignominious Fate, since they know the Misery to be felt here is of short Duration: Whereas, if the Punishment was lingering, not depriving them of Life, but rendering it disagreeable and unpleasant, it would be greater and more severe, because of longer Duration; and would, in all Probability, prevent many Offences. Besides, by this Provision, they might have some Knowledge of Religion, and entertain some serious Thoughts of a future State; which, it is to be feared, many of these unfortunate Persons have never attended to or believed, till the Time of their Exit. They have put an End to a miserable Life; imagine that they cannot be more miserable than they have been, and are therefore regardless of the Felicity, and have no Dread or just Apprehension of the Punishment of another State.

It is from the Want of a due Sense and Reverence for Religion, that Hypocrisy, Dissimulation and Fraud are so much in Vogue; Honesty, Sincerity, and plain Dealing, out of Fashion: That every one studies his own
private

private Ease and Tranquillity, gives little Attention to the publick Welfare and Prosperity, looks only to the enriching himself and Family, and is unconcerned at the Distress and Poverty of the Nation, if so be his own Coffers are well filled. When Men think well of Religion, and act consistent with its Precepts, there will be no Want of capital Laws to make them honest ; which, if thought to be necessary, are, without such Obedience and Respect, rendered of none Effect. When Conscience is stifled, or has lost its Influence, and a future State is ridiculed, contemned or disregarded, human Laws are, as from the publick Executions they appear to be, useless.

The Thought of a future Existence oftentimes prevents the Commission of a bad Action : It keeps many honest, who are by Will and Inclination otherwise disposed ; which, when effaced, cancelled, overlooked or neglected, makes men cruel, wicked and unjust. And such those Men will always be, who act without Conscience and live without Religion.

To conclude,

As Religion shews us the Way to be happy in this as well as in the next World,
since

since it teaches Contentment in our Situation of Life, not foolishly to squander away what we have, nor injuriously to procure what we have not; as it shews us, and Experience may convince us of the Truth, that our Wants and Necessities, if great and pressing, are transient and momentary; and that we ought, on that Account, nobly to resolve to be superior to, or sink under the Weight of them, rather than meanly and basely seek Relief by Means unjust, illegal and dishonest; as Religion teaches us whatsoever is great and good, whatsoever may add Grace and Ornament to our Nature, and displays the Folly and Weakness as well as the Distress and Misery, that attend the Practice of Vice; as it teaches us to be honest, sober, temperate, not malicious, envious and injurious, we cannot, unless we are Enemies to our own Happiness, but observe her Laws. We cannot begin the Practice too early, nor recommend it to Youth too soon. For so long as we are, and continue religious, so long we may be truly and justly said to be happy. We cannot, indeed, be exempt from the common Accidents of Life, which happen alike to the Good and the Bad; yet we shall never feel nor suffer those

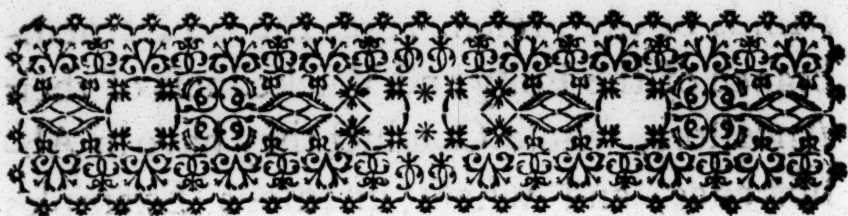
those Troubles and Calamities which Vice constantly bestows upon those, who are so weak or so wicked as to practise it.

Steadily adhere to the Precepts of your Religion ; seek not, nor covet Superfluities ; be satisfied with what is necessary and convenient ; remember that the End of Existence here is the Beginning of Happiness or Misery hereafter, and Happiness or Misery eternal. Teach and instruct your Family in the same wholesome and useful Principles ; recommend and encourage the Practice by your own Example ; then neither you nor they will ever experience the Misfortunes and Uneasiness of the Wicked, nor leave this World with Shame or Ignominy, nor be exposed to endless Misery, but enjoy everlasting Happiness hereafter.

Y

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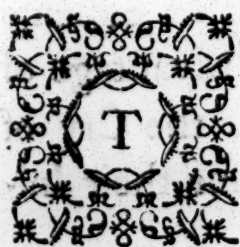
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The Thirtieth of JANUARY.

St. PETER, 1 Ep. CHAP. ii. V. 17.

“ Love the Brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King.”



THE Occasion of this Day's Solemnity, few are unacquainted with. The melancholy Events, which then occurred, we have to this Time experienced. An Enquiry into the Causes that produced them, is a Subject more proper for an Historian, than the Preacher. Besides, it is more generous and humane to throw a Veil over the Transactions of that Age, wherein such Scenes of Disorder and Confusion were exhibited, a Scandal to the Profession of Christians, a Disgrace to the Name of

Englishmen. It would also be stirring up the Ashes of the Dead, and bringing to the Minds of the present Age, the sad Remembrance of the Folly and Wickedness of their Ancestors, whose Conduct they have in Abhorrence, and whose infamous Examples they intend not to imitate.

Another Reason for omitting an Account of the Proceedings of that remarkable Period, is to avoid Reflections upon a Set of Men, who though first in Opposition, from a tender and sincere Regard of the People's Freedom, and an honest Jealousy of the Royal Power, never thought of nor intended to subvert the one, or destroy the other; that being the concerted Scheme but of a few, who took an Advantage of the publick Distress, and made the Cry of Liberty and Religion a Cloak for their Iniquity and Rebellion.

Waving, therefore, such an Enquiry, I shall endeavour to explain, and recommend the Practice of the Duties contained in the Text; which, I hope, will not be unsuitable to the Day, since religious Discord, Prophaneness and Immorality, a Contempt and Disregard for Royalty, were not a little instrumental in bringing upon this Nation the Calamities now commemorated.

First,

First, Let us love the Brotherhood.

By Brotherhood, is to be understood all Christians whatsoever, they being, in the Language of Scripture, stiled Brethren. By loving them, is meant the doing them all Offices of Kindness and Civility in our Power. Happy for Christianity were its Professors thus to act! Happy Nation, when the People are brought to lay aside the contrary Behaviour, so ill agreeing with their Character as Men, Fellow-Subjects, Christians, and Heirs of the same Promises of God.

The Dissention and Disunion subsisting amongst Protestants, are much to be lamented; since they are an Encouragement to Infidelity, and give no little Advantage to the Adversaries of the Protestant Cause. But then what Occasion for insulting and opprobrious Language? Why should a Difference in Opinion produce Hatred and Animosity amongst ourselves? Is it not possible for a Man, who dissents from the Church, to be a good Christian and a good Subject? As human Appointments cannot lay Claim to Infallibility, since Customs adopted by ancient Times have, in Yucceeding Ages, been altered or reversed, and as every one

has an undoubted Right of determining his own Conscience, where Abilities are not wanting, why should we deny that Freedom to others, which we ourselves make Use of? Why upbraid and censure them, for what we in ourselves allow to be right and just?

Permit we then these different Opinions to be entertained, so long as they are not injurious to the Cause of Virtue and Religion, nor prejudicial to Man's Salvation; so long as Men live peaceably with each other, and do not make a Handle of these Divisions to create Disturbances in the State; so long as they confine not their Favours to those of their own Following, but only bestow where Merit demands, and give where Want requires. We wish, that in these Duties we were not found highly criminal. We wish, that Persons of Credit and Reputation always had their Reward; that Charity and Beneficence were not confined to a Sect. What other Recommendations to Places of Profit and Trust have many had, than being Zealots of a Party? What Disqualifications others, than being of a particular Following? How ungenerous, unreasonable and unjust such Behaviour? The Enquiry should not be, who, but what
he

he is ; not whether he frequents the Church or Meeting, but whether he is the Friend of Virtue and an Enemy to Vice ; not whether he admits or rejects all that the Church requires and commands, but whether or no he believes the Doctrines and lives up to the Rules of Christianity ; such Doctrines and Rules as appear to him to be clearly and plainly revealed and made known in the sacred Scriptures. These are the Persons most highly and justly deserving of Esteem ; yet how seldom do they meet with it ? The Man who thus lives and acts, entirely detached from Party, at least the Violence of it, and treats those of different Persuasions with Temper and Candour, is by the more charitable Christian censured as weak, by the Bigot as wicked.

If we are to form our Judgment of Protestants from their Behaviour to each other, we could hardly persuade ourselves, that they professed the same Religion. From the partial and reserved Temper, it might be doubted also, whether they belonged to the same Country : A Behaviour which Christianity does not countenance, and the Laws of Society condemn. Christianity commands us to exercise Humanity and Charity to all, to Strangers, even to Ene-

mies. Shall we then behave with less Humanity and Charity towards those, who are of the same Religion, the same Country, have the same Lord and Saviour, the same Hopes, and are entitled to the same Happiness? Shall we have Dealings with those, who are not only ignorant, but the declared Enemies of Christianity? And shall Christians confine their Dealings at home within their own particular Sect? Shall Turks with Turks live in a friendly and hospitable Manner? Shall the rude and wild Barbarians live in mutual Love and Harmony amongst themselves? And Christians alone be at Variance and Enmity with each other? Hate, despise, plunder, persecute and destroy each other? Let it not be told to the Heathen: Let it never more be known and practised amongst us.

Howsoever we may disagree in other Matters, let us in this be agreed, to perform Offices of mutual Love and Friendship. If we have a real Regard for the Cause of Christianity; if we have a Value for our own private Interest, and the publick Peace and Tranquillity, without which we cannot enjoy what we have with Safety and Security, with Ease and Satisfaction; let us discountenance and put an End to
all

all Jealousies and Animosities subsisting. And though we may think differently of Matters, of which no certain Knowledge, after the most deep and laborious Enquiries, can be had, and of the Obligation to observe certain Rites and Ceremonies, which, though good, excellent and worthy of Observation, are but human Appointments and Institutions, *still let us love as Brethren*, remembering that that is the Mark and Characteristick of a true Christian: *For by this, saith Christ, shall all Men know, that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one towards another.*

Then we may expect to see, when Christians are united, if not in Sentiment, yet in Love and Friendship, and the little and base Arts of aspersing, vilifying and censuring each other's Persons and Characters are laid aside, then we may expect to see, but not till then, the End of Immorality and Infidelity; which these Hatreds and Resentments, kept up amongst Christians, cherish and encourage, in which Men of bad Principles and wicked Practices find an Account.

In Matters speculative, our Ignorance is great, our Knowledge, if any, but little, and that confused and imperfect. How
unjust

unjust and unreasonable then to censure, much more to behave injuriously to others, whose Opinions may be different, since we cannot demonstrate ourselves to be in the right. The Doctrines of Predestination and Election have employed the Pens of able and great Men : But, notwithstanding all that has been said, do they not remain as obscure, unintelligible, and disputable as at the first ? They are not proper Subjects for human Disquisitions ; and it is rather a Proof of our Weakness, than Judgment, to waste Time in curiously prying into and exploring Secrets, which are known only to the Almighty.

Well would it have been for Christianity in the early Ages of it, not less beneficial in these Times, if Men had been content with amusing and pleasing themselves with their own Ignorance, and not have made those Points as necessary Articles of Faith, which they cannot understand, nor clearly explain to others ; and not to have bestowed Censures, inflicted Penalties, thundered out Excommunications and raised Persecutions against the opposite Party. This has been too much the Practice of the Christian Church in the several Ages of it before and after its Commencement of a national Religion,
down

down to the present Period: A Practice which Christianity condemns, as it not only keeps up Divisions amongst Christians, but encourages Enmities, Disputes and Controversies, as ancient Times have severely experienced, to which the present are not, we wish they were, entire Strangers.

Secondly,
Fear God.

Another Precept contained in the Text, and which, when duly attended to, and religiously observed, will be in a great Measure instrumental in preventing us from suffering the same Calamities and Afflictions, with which our Ancestors were once affected, is the Fear of God, that is, the Practice of Religion. When once Men are superior to and uninfluenced by it; when Conscience is lulled to sleep, and Men neither attend to, nor obey its Dictates; then it is, that there is no Wickedness, no Villainy, however great and offensive, but they will easily come into and execute. Hence Fraud and Dishonesty, Extravagance and Intemperance, Bribery and Corruption, so much and so justly complained of in these Days. When Men have got above the Reverence due to Religion, then it is, that we
see

see Virtue in the greatest Distress, and Vice triumphant.

We wish that this Fear of God, this Reverence for Religion was more visible. It is indeed impossible, so long as Men are Men, so long as the World exists, but there should be Wickedness in it; of which there has been more or less in all Ages of the World. We wish that it did not too much prevail in this, and that Virtue was not so rarely seen, as like a Light shining in a dark Place to surprize us.

Need I mention as a Motive to have this Fear of God, this awful Regard for the divine Laws, the good Effects which will flow from it? Need I mention the bad Effects of a Neglect or Contempt of it? Do you want to be told what real and solid Pleasure and Satisfaction attend the Practice of the Duties of Religion; what Distress and Misery the contrary Behaviour? If good, you must in yourselves have experienced the Truth of the former, and you need not go far to seek Examples to convince you of the Truth of the latter; they are too numerous; every Lane and Corner of your City presents you with some of these deplorable Objects. Yet deplorable as they really are, how are the bad Examples imitated; how
many

many are hastening on to the same dismal Situation? They may flatter themselves that such will not be their Case: I grant that it may not. Poverty, Shame and Ignominy are not indeed the Portion of all wicked Men; some few escape: But a weak and sickly Body, a disturbed and disordered Soul, no one who has lived wickedly ever was, or ever will be free from. This is the Condition only of good and pious Men; who, though they are not exempt from the common Accidents and Misfortunes of Life, which happen agreeable to the Order established by divine Providence, have none of the Uneasiness and Affliction, which trouble and befall the Wicked. They are indeed visited with Sicknes, but Intemperance is not the Cause; they are in Trouble, but not through any Fault of their own; they are brought low by Poverty, but Folly is not the Cause; they are in Sorrow, but not by a guilty Conscience,—Sicknes, Trouble, Sorrow and Poverty, all the Sons of Adam are exposed to, and are more or less afflicted with; but these Calamities fall heavier upon the Wicked, because they are generally in them the Effects of Folly and Extravagance, and Reflection administers

no

no Comfort and Consolation, but encreases their Pain and Misery.

Let me ask, to yourselves, to your Conscience I make the Appeal, did you ever find yourself uneasy after the Performance of Duty? Did you ever repent of any Good done? Hath not Reflection afforded Pleasure and Satisfaction? Did you meet with this Pleasure and Satisfaction from the Neglect of Duty? Did you ever find yourself the better for the Practice of Vice? Have you never felt any Uneasiness after it? Has your Mind been as composed and undisturbed after, as before the Commission of Sin? Has not something within convinced you, that you had done wrong? Have you not wished, that what hath been, never had been done? If such then is the Difference between the Righteous and the Wicked, between those who practise the Duties of Religion, and those who do not, such the Happiness of the one, such the Misery of the other in this Life; I mention not the Joy and Sorrow which awaits them in the next World; if it is impossible not to feel these disagreeable Sensations if wicked, let us always fear God and keep his Commandments, for it is that alone, which can give

Peace

Peace of Mind here, and prevent our being miserable hereafter.

I know it may be said, that wicked Men are oftentimes prosperous, free from any uncommon Misfortunes, and that even their Wickedness is the Cause of their Prosperity. This has been Matter of Complaint in all Ages. The Heathens were unable to account for this strange Proceeding of Providence; which occasioned some to deny, and others to doubt, not only of a Providence, but of the Being of God Himself. When they saw Virtue in Distress, and Vice decked in its Spoils; when they saw those who had injured, oppressed, plundered and enslaved their Country, great in Wealth and Power; whilst the Brave, the Generous and the Good, the Friends of Liberty and the Gods were distressed, persecuted and slain; if there are Gods, they cried, why do the Innocent fall unpitied, and the Guilty live unrevengeed?

But what was Surprise and Astonishment to the Heathen, cannot be so to the Christian. For observe the Tenderneſs of God to Sinners, yet to the virtuous just. We have in the Gospel, the Reason why he does not always interpoſe in an extraordinary Manner in puniſhing Sinners, and rewarding the Good,

Good ; because Mankind is to be punished or rewarded in another Life, and that Sinners might have an Opportunity of repenting and saving themselves from eternal Ruin and Destruction.

Hence let not the Wicked triumph in the Spoils of Virtue and Religion, nor grow rich and great by Oppression, Injustice, or at the publick Expence ; since though here they may come in no Misfortune like other Folk, yet their Crimes will not fail of the Vengeance they have deserved hereafter. Neither let the Good be dejected, nor discouraged, nor prompted to charge God foolishly, as if he had deserted the Cause of Virtue ; since this Proceeding is agreeable to the Gospel Dispensation, and all their Sufferings here will be more than recompensed hereafter. Let the Wicked possess their Wealth, their Power, their Honours, without your Envy ; if they yield them Pleasure, let them enjoy it, for it is purchased at an inestimable Price, Infamy in this, Misery in the next World.

They are not, however, without Trouble and Uneasiness. Thoughtless and unconcerned as they seem to be abroad, engaged in Company and revelling in Pleasures, when at Home, retired from the World and
alone

alone, then sad Reflection comes, it cannot be stifled; in those sober and serious Hours they must feel Remorse of Conscience, and what they then feel, may no one ever experience. Pleasures indeed quickly succeed, and divert the melancholy Thoughts; but the Time will come, when Pleasures can be no longer enjoyed, and Reflection no longer stifled nor diverted; then, when afflicted with Sickness or Disease, and mostly wanting Comfort, no Comfort can they find; wanting Mercy and despairing of obtaining it, they look back upon their past Lives with Horror, and look forward without Hope; confounded and amazed with Guilt, they dare not intreat Heaven for Pardon undeserved, yet they know not how to die without it. They have lived wickedly, but dread the Thoughts of dying so; they are apprehensive of the Punishment, which their Sins have merited, and not knowing how to divert it, as they have spent their Lives miserably, so they end their Days desperately.

Proceed we now to explain briefly the other Precept contained in the Text, namely,

Z

Honour

Honour the King.

We are herein required to shew all due Respect and Deference to his Person, and exalted Character; to pay all lawful and just Obedience to his Commands; to assist him in the Execution of his Laws; to oppose all Invaders of his Right; to aid him in repelling the Attacks, and defeating the Designs of his and our Enemies, either foreign or domestick, at home or abroad, with our Counsel, our Fortunes, our Lives; to suffer no Infringement of his Power and Authority, so long as it is not exercised against, but in Support of the Constitution; to act neither the Part of Slaves nor Rebels, never forgetting our Allegiance, nor meanly prostituting or tamely giving up our native Freedom: Ever remembering that Allegiance is only due, when the Laws of the Nation are not perverted, the Religion not changed, nor its Liberties invaded. Attacks upon the Peoples Liberties, were the principal Causes of the publick Calamities and Misfortunes this Day remembered. The sad Remembrance of which, we pray God, may ever prevent any Differences between King and People, cause Peace and Union
to

to reign amongst us, and the Designs of wicked and ambitious Men to be ever baffled and disappointed.

To conclude.

Let us diligently attend to and practise the Advice of the Apostle, that is, to love the Brotherhood, to fear God, and to honour the King; then we shall be good Men, good Christians, and good Subjects; we shall live comfortably here, and be happy hereafter.



229

W. R. M. O. S.

The following is a list of the
names of the persons who have
been appointed to the office of
the

In the year 1861, the
following persons were appointed
to the office of the
The following persons were
appointed to the office of the
The following persons were
appointed to the office of the

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A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT

CHRIST CHURCH

In NEWGATE-STREET,

On TUESDAY the 21st of SEPTEMBER, 1756.

BEFORE

The Right Honourable the LORD MAYOR,

The ALDERMEN,

And GOVERNORS of the several HOSPITALS of this City.



THE BRITISH MUSEUM

CHARTER OF INCORPORATION



BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT

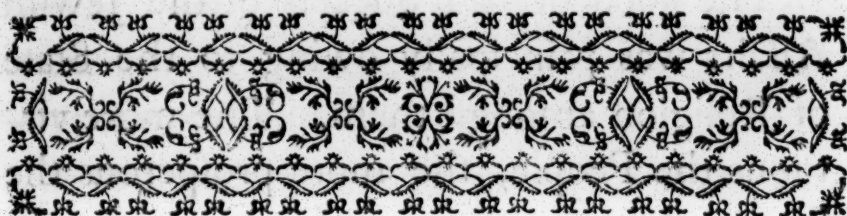
IN THE SEVENTH YEAR OF HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE THE FOURTH

AND BY ROYAL CHARTER UNDER THE GREAT SEAL OF GREAT BRITAIN

THE ALDREMAN

OF THE CITY OF LONDON

DOETH HEREBY CERTIFY



2 SAMUEL xvii. 23.

“ And when Ahithophel saw that his
 “ Counsel was not followed, he saddled
 “ his Ass and arose, and gat him home
 “ to his House, to his City, and put his
 “ Household in order ; and hanged him-
 “ self.”

T H E R E is no History, the
 Roman excepted, which a-
 bounds with such a Variety
 of Incidents, useful and en-
 tertaining, as the Jewish :
 There is not any, that reads better Lessons
 of sound Wisdom and good Policy to Po-
 licy to Posterity. Though the Jews were
 not, of all Nations, the most remarkable
 for the ablest Politicians, yet in their Mis-
 conduct future Times may provide against

the same Misfortunes, which have happened to them.

The good or bad Success of the Jewish Affairs was principally owing to the State of Religion amongst them. The more virtuous the People, the more prosperous the State ; the more vicious, the more adverse. This is confirmed in the Character of their Commanders, who, before the Establishment of the Regal Authority, were Men of little Note and Eminence, of less Skill and Ability. This Choice of Instruments, deficient both in Courage and Judgment, seems to have been purposely made, that the Deity might more visibly appear to be, what he had declared himself to be, their chief Commander.

After the ceasing of the Divine, and the Establishment of the Regal Government, we read of some eminent for Prudence and Valour, experienced both in the Field and Cabinet. Under the Conduct and Management of such, the Jewish State prospered, so long as they were disinterested, and Religion was observed by them and the People. But when Religion declined amongst the lower Class, and Oppression began to be exercised by the higher, and both were by Vice and Luxury weakened and enervated,
it

it became an easy Prey to their Enemies : And without murmuring and repining, they suffered their Liberty and Property to be invaded and destroyed by every daring and designing Knave both in Church and State.

If you consult the prophetick Writings, what has been advanced concerning the Jewish Governors, civil and ecclesiastical, will appear to be true. Their Princes, or great Men, were Companions of Thieves ; they dealt treacherously ; the Prophets taught and prophesied for Hire ; the Judges were corrupt, Lovers of Gifts, and fond of Bribes, to pervert the Cause of Justice, to injure the Oppressed, and protect the Injurious from Punishment.

It is worthy of Observation, that the Jewish Kings were not the most fortunate in the Choice of their Ministers, who were generally selfish and rapacious, and through Exactions and Oppressions rendered them odious to the Publick. No King seems to have been more unfortunate in a Minister, than David : No one more imposed upon and deceived by one, whom he had advanced and promoted ; by one, who was by the Ties of Gratitude, the considerable Favours conferred upon him, and the peculiar Friendship shewn to him, bound to
render

render him the most faithful Service. Yet this Man, thus raised to the highest Station in the Kingdom, esteemed and caressed by the King, as his greatest and principal Friend, raised, encouraged, aided and assisted in a Rebellion against him: Whose Fate was as singular as his Ingratitude; for according to the Text, “ he hanged himself.”

From what has been briefly said concerning the Jewish State, we are naturally led in this Time of Danger to consider our own. But you must not expect to be entertained with an Enquiry into the publick Transactions; that belongs to other Places and Persons, who are more conversant and experienced in them; therefore the most proper, because the most able, to perform such a Work. I shall only consider the Usefulness of the Practice of Religion to procure the divine Favour, and defeat our Enemies.

And first, God will espouse the Cause of those, who love him.

This appears to be as agreeable to Reason, as it is consistent with Religion. God has promised to have a Regard to those, who are obedient to his Commands. And what he has promised, he will undoubtedly fulfil,

fulfil, if we do not by Disobedience render ourselves unworthy, and incapable of receiving it. What Religion offers to those, who revere it, Reason must allow to be just: For if there is a God, he must delight in every Thing, that is great and good: And as he delights in it himself, so must he be pleased with those who are, and not only be pleased with, but reward them.

It does not seem to be inconsistent with his Providence in the Government of the World, nor with human Liberty, to distinguish those, who act agreeable, from those who act contrary to his Will. This Distinction seems to be as necessary, as it is just. For though Virtue might for its own Sake be admired by a few, yet the Generality of Men would with Difficulty be prevailed upon to follow it, if they were not on that Account more prosperous and successful.

This was the Opinion of the ancient Heathen, who were zealous in observing the Rites and Ceremonies of their Religion, and paying a strict and due Regard to whatsoever they thought might please their Deities; and whose Undertakings, on Account of their religious Zeal, were generally rendered successful; not by the Deities they worshipped,

shipped, who had no real Existence, but by that God, who, it is probable, beheld their Piety with Pleasure, though offered to false Deities; owing principally to Error and Ignorance, and the Want of that Light, which he afterwards communicated to them in the Gospel, and by which alone they could discover the true and real Object of divine Worship.

In those Ages Men could only hope for and expect the Aid and Assistance of the Powers adored; they had no Assurance of it: But we are now assured by divine Truth, that those who love Him, he will love; and give to them the Life which now is, as well as that which is to come. He will not only be their Benefactor, in constantly supplying their Wants, but their Protector in defending them from Injuries, or, when injured, their Avenger, in punishing the Injurious.

It is at all Times necessary to procure the divine Favour, but especially in Times of Danger and Distress. In no Time more than the present, when we have an Enemy too powerful, to be contemptible; too formidable, not to require the utmost Exertion of our native Courage and Resolution; too much strengthened in himself and Alliances,

liances, not to court the Assistance of Heaven: Especially when it is considered, what little Aid we receive from foreign Powers in Alliance with us, and how dear the Purchase of that little! when our principal Dependance under Providence, for Safety and Security, is upon Natives, and Natives, a few excepted, unarmed and undisciplined.

To whom then can we better apply for Relief in this Day of Calamity, than to him, who, when all human Means fail, is able to afford Assistance? He must, he will, he cannot but assist those, whose Obedience to his Laws claim and demand it. He has engaged his Word for the Performance of it, and he will, by Ways unknown and improbable, fulfil it.

“By Strength” he hath said, “shall no Man prevail.” Let then the Armies of our Enemy be great, numerous and powerful, if God is on our Side, what have we to dread, or fear? “One will,” as saith the Scripture, “be able to chase a thousand.” To prove this, I could cite Examples from the Jewish History, but our own contains a Variety of similar Occurrences. It is needless to mention the Times of an Edward, an Henry, and an Anne. Few are unacquainted

quainted with the surprising and unexpected Victories then obtained by Sea and Land: Victories not less owing to the Piety and Goodness of the People, than the Valour and Prudence of the Forces.

Though the present Age is far from being the most virtuous and most religious, so neither is it what the Weak and Ignorant have represented it to be, the most wicked and most irreligious. Compared with the Times we are speaking of, there is indeed less of Virtue, and more of Vice. Crimes then little known, and when committed, used to fill the Mind with Horror, such as the heinous and detestable Sins of Perjury, Sodomy, and Murder, are now too much countenanced and practised.

A Reformation of Manners is indeed wanted, and will undoubtedly be of singular Benefit, not less to Individuals, than to the Publick. We have had the Pleasure to see upon a late melancholy Occasion, that the People are not averse and indisposed to it. In that Day of Humiliation the Places of Devotion were crowded, not out of Ostentation or to avoid Censure; the Behaviour shewed the Devotion to have been real and undisssembled. It is hoped, that we have, since that Time, made some Progress

gress in Piety and Goodness, and are ready to shew, that a Reformation is not so difficult as hath been imagined.

As the People have discovered an Inclination towards it, it may become their Superiors to cherish and encourage it. For if Religion was not (what it is) of divine Authority, but a political Contrivance to keep the Weak and Ignorant in Awe and Subjection, even then it will be found both useful and necessary to enforce and procure an Obedience to its Laws, because it will undoubtedly promote the Welfare and Happiness of the State.

It has been a prevailing Custom with most Nations in Time of War, especially if they had been unsuccessful, to appoint Days of religious Observance to implore the Assistance of Heaven: A Custom that has been observed by us. It may not be now unnecessary: But it seems to be improper and impertinent to pray for Success, when we are not permitted the Use of Arms, and have no other Weapons to defend ourselves, or annoy the Enemy, than what Nature has given us. Can we reasonably expect, that our Prayers will be heard, when we do not make Use of the Means, which Providence and the Nature of our Constitution have put

put into our Power? Whom can we better trust, than our own People? In whose Hands can we, with more Safety and less Danger, repose our Lives, our Fortunes, our Liberties and Religion, than in those, whose Happiness and Preservation will entirely depend upon the Assistance and Protection they shall afford us?

A Militia can be of no Prejudice to a free State. It is the only Security of the People's Rights and Liberties against the Weakness and Inability, the Treachery and Cowardice, the Arts and Designs of wicked great Men: And neither is it injurious to the Regal Power, or Interest. It was the Security and Safeguard of Prince and People in the Reign of Elizabeth. It was indeed of Prejudice in Charles's; but the unhappy Influence of bad Ministers was the Cause, in whom the King placed too much Confidence. This was his Weakness; and in the End proved his Ruin.

Persons entrusted with the Affairs of a free Government, if they abuse that Trust, may dread the Consequence of such an Establishment: But to those, whose Conduct is fair, open and just, it is of considerable Use and Advantage; as it enables them to plan and execute their Schemes with more
Spirit

Spirit and Vigour, and to molest and distress the Enemy abroad, when they have nothing to fear from him at home.

But secondly, Vice unfits Men for the publick Service.

It weakens and impairs the Constitution, and renders it incapable of enduring Labour and Fatigue. Luxury and Voluptuousness are so far from inspiring the Mind with a Love or Desire to perform any Thing truly great, that Fear and Cowardice are the natural Offsprings. True Courage is founded on Virtue; where that is not, it proceeds not from Inclination, or Choice, but absolute Necessity.

The Man who is given to Pleasure, thinks more of preserving himself, than annoying the Enemy; prefers a shameful Retreat to an honourable Death.

The Man who is given to Avarice, will not court but avoid Danger; engages where his Interest, not his Honour, is concerned; and is not less the Friend of the Enemy, than of the Publick.

The Man who is intemperate will hazard more than he can gain; is rather desperate than valiant, rather mad than prudent.

A a

But

But he, who has a Regard for Virtue and Religion, is the only Man fit to be trusted, since he alone has a true Contempt of Death. There is no Hardship, but he will patiently endure it; no Undertaking hazardous and dangerous, but with a calm and resolute Spirit he will engage in, when it is for the Interest and Service of his Country. If successful, he is not so pleased with the Reward conferred upon him, as the Satisfaction he feels within, from having discharged his Duty, and served the Publick. If unsuccessful, he has nothing to fear hereafter. His Death is indeed a Loss to his Country; for that he could not live too long; but to himself a considerable Gain, for he must be happy, cannot be miserable.

What States, what Kingdoms, what Empires have been overturned; what Armies destroyed by Dissoluteness and Intemperance! —What made Persia so easy a Conquest to Alexander, but the effeminate Manners of the Persians?—What made the Romans obtain so many Victories, and be so successful in War, but their Virtue and Temperance joined to their Valour and Conduct? —To what was the Defeat of Hannibal owing, but Licentiousness?—And what but the

the same Enemy, at the last conquered his Conquerors?—How came the City of Babylon to have been so easily taken by Cyrus, but because the King of it, his Princes and Captains were revelling and banquetting with Women, when they should have been clad with Armour?—What enabled the ancient Britons so bravely to have withstood the Conquerors of the World, inured to the Toil of the Field, but the Purity and Simplicity of their Manners, and a Constitution strong and robust, not weakened and enervated by Vice?—What made an Henry so rapid in his Conquest of France, but because he fought against Women, not Men?—What occasioned the Defeat of the Spanish Armado, but the Goodness and Skill of our Naval Power?—And to what can you generally impute any Victory, or Defeat, but to the Discipline, or Licentiousness of Commanders, or Men, or both?

Cræsus, to prevent the future Revolts of the Lydians, advised Cyrus not to permit them to have any Arms, and to order, that Parents should bring up their Children in Luxury and Effeminacy, to sing, to play upon Instruments of Musick, to feast, to revel, &c. By which Means their native Courage and Resolution would fail them,

and if they did revolt, he could have nothing to fear from Men transformed into Women. The Advice was followed, and it had the desired Effect.

And in whatsoever State this Method of Education has prevailed, or those Practices have been countenanced, it is well known, that Slavery or Ruin followed; that the People were exposed either to the Oppression and Insolence of foreign, or the more cruel and intolerable Depredations of domestic Enemies.

That the Practices mentioned prevail amongst us, you will not call upon me to prove. We wish for the Interest of Religion and the Good of our Country, that they were less frequent and obvious. It is, however, hoped, that they do not so much prevail, as to reduce us to the disagreeable Alternative, either of being Tributaries to a foreign Power abroad, or, what is worse, of being Slaves at home.

A Return to the ancient British Manners, which made this Nation respected, or feared by the neighbouring States, and laying aside foreign Accomplishments with foreign Vices, so much admired and imitated, will render our Situation, not, as at present, dangerous. What has been advanced may
not

not be credited by some, who cannot reconcile the Danger with their Love of their Country, and who are apt to imagine, according to their Wishes, that though her Colonies may suffer abroad, she is safe and secure from any Injury at home. May she ever be so ! But let us not be too credulous nor too confident.

Where are now the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, the Roman Monarchies ? What of their Wealth, Power and Grandeur remains ? Did they fear or suspect, what we, when we read, are astonished and amazed at, their Dissolution ? Are we Strangers to the Cause of those ever memorable and interesting Events ? If a Neglect of publick Virtue exposed them to Ruin, can it be thought, that the general Practice of Vice will secure any State from the same unhappy Catastrophe ?

The Carthaginians and Romans were once equal ; neither gained a complete Victory over the other ; both seemed to be, and might have remained invincible, had not the former yielded themselves up to Debauchery, and then they were easily conquered.

The same Effect will follow, where the Cause is the same. We have, I believe, ex-

perienced its Truth. It is hoped, that we never shall again. Great Commanders never sought to enrich themselves, but aggrandize their Country, and make it to be honoured and esteemed. Softness and Delicacy may suit well in Kings Courts, but are not adapted to the Fleet, nor the Army. To such the Timbrel and the Dance are more agreeable Sounds, than the roaring of Cannon and the Clash of Arms. The Man who cannot conquer himself, subdue his own Lufts, and is above Religion, seems to be a Person very improper and unfit to be engaged in, or trusted with any publick Employment. The Happiness of such is entirely founded on the Enjoyment of the Pleasures and Profits of this Life. They have no future Hopes, their Actions plainly shew it; and therefore, with very little Reluctance or Remorse, they will sacrifice what should be held dear and valuable to All, and is so to all good and brave Men, the Honour and Interest of their Country, so that they may live at Ease, and enjoy themselves.

Have you not observed in private Life, that Men devoted to unlawful Pleasures, whom Vice has enslaved, that to gratify their vicious Passions, Business has been neglected;

glected; and by the Diseases and Disorders contracted, they have been rendered incapable of transacting? And are not Men of a publick Character, if vicious and immoral, equally unfit and incapable to execute any thing to an Advantage? Are not the Families of private Persons, by their Follies, exposed to Poverty and Contempt? And have not States and Kingdoms experienced from the same Cause, the same unhappy Effects?

But it is Time to have done with a Subject so disagreeable, though necessary, and hasten to some Reflections upon what has been said; which, duly attended to, may prevent those Consequences happening to us, which have already happened to States not less flourishing and powerful.

First, If God will assist those who love him: And whom can he assist but such, if it does not interfere with the established Order and Government of the World? For to favour the Wicked, or not to favour the Righteous, would be an Encouragement to Wickedness, and lessen the Obligations to the Practice of Virtue. Are not Exhortations to Piety and Goodness rendered needless? Shall we by this Means procure

the Divine Concurrence and Assistance in our Undertakings? Secure of his Protection, let the Enemy devise and contrive, it will be in vain. It belongs to a superior Power to give Success. We perceive then, that it is not only our Duty, but our Interest to be religious. In private Life, every one who is religious, is sensibly convinced of this Truth; and it need not be doubted, but that publick Virtue will meet with the same Reward: It is that which will effectually remove every Fear, make us more than Men, and ready and willing to encounter with any Difficulty and Danger.

The Calamities which are the certain Consequences of War, are many and distressing: Not at all desirable, if they can, consistent with the publick Good and Safety, be avoided. There is no State, however rich and opulent, but may be impoverished; however great and flourishing, but may be brought to Ruin by it. Whilst it continues, it must be a Burden to the Subject; which if grievous, ought to be borne with Patience; if not, with Chearfulness: Because it is difficult, if not impossible, to support and carry on a War without suffering something inconvenient and disagreeable. But if it is really so, and we are desirous of having it

removed, to whom can we apply for a speedy and happy End, but to Him who alone can grant our Request; to God? That our Request will be granted, we may be assured, if we are careful to observe his Laws.

Secondly, To be an happy, we must endeavour to be a religious People. We must not think to conquer our Enemies, before we have subdued our Vices. Can it surprise, that the Hands should be weak, and Courage fail, if the Heart is corrupt, and the Conscience defiled? The best Support of Society is the Practice of Religion; and the Man who is religious, is its best and truest Friend.—Let us then lay aside our Vices—Let us abstain from every Pleasure, which is criminal and unlawful—Let us not indulge ourselves in any Thing, which may hurt the Understanding, or enfeeble the Body: For the contrary Behaviour is not only prejudicial to private Interest and Happiness, but gives an Advantage to the Enemy, renders our Attempts very precarious, frequently unsuccessful, and makes us an easy Prey to any Invader.

Few Ages can boast of such a Spirit, as now reigns amongst the People: Such a general

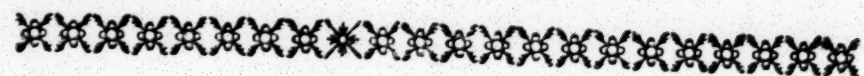
neral Desire of carrying on the War with Vigour and Resolution. This would be a Terror to the Enemy, provided, that the Head was not sick, the Heart faint, and the Knees feeble. They know, that Luxury and Effeminacy have within these few Years greatly spread amongst us; that our Morals are corrupted, and our Constitutions debauched: Too visible in our weak and sickly Offspring. They dread nothing so much as a Return to our ancient Temperance and Frugality; their own Annals acquainting them what they are then to expect from us. But alas! what have they to fear from Persons worn out in the Service of Luxury and Debauchery? More fit to be the Keepers of Women, than the Guardians of Men!

But thanks be to God, that the Nation is not totally vitiated: That there are not wanting Men, both Inferiors and Superiors, able and willing to serve their King, and defend their Country, from every Invader, either of its Liberty or Property. A Country, like the Land of *Canaan*, full and plenteous of all Manner of Store — A King, like *David*, esteemed and beloved by his People — A People, prepared to sacrifice their Lives
and

and Fortunes for his Honour, and the Interest of the Publick.

May they ever be happy in a mutual Confidence—May no false Insinuations, nor ungenerous Misrepresentations of mistaken or pretended Friends, create Suspicions and Jealousies between them—May Honesty and Integrity reign amongst the Great, Loyalty and Religion amongst the People; Zeal and Unanimity in all—May we undertake with Spirit, and execute with Vigour—May the Lord of Hosts grant Success, and the End be an honourable and lasting Peace.

To the Blessed Trinity be given all Power and Glory, now and for ever: Amen.



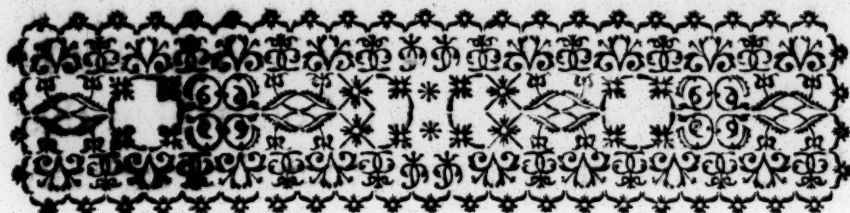
MISTRANSLATIONS

AND

FALSE POSITIONS, &c.







MISTRANSLATIONS

A N D

FALSE POSITIONS

OF THE

HEBREW TEXT CORRECTED.

וישם יהוה לקני אור *And the Lord set a Mark upon Cain* *. These Words are of dubious Signification, and have been differently translated. The Variety of Opinions, which have been entertained, is briefly noted by Dr. Patrick in his Commentary ; whose Remark upon them is, *that we must be content to be ignorant of their Meaning*. We shall not, however, follow the Doctor's Advice, but endeavour to remove the present Obscurity. Our Translation seems to countenance

* Genesis iv. 15.

tenance the Conceit of the Rabbies, that *God branded him with a certain Mark on his Forehead*; and to agree with a modern, but not less weak and ridiculous Notion, that *he was changed into a Black*; from whom that Race of Men has been thought originally to have proceeded, not recollecting that it must have been entirely destroyed by the Flood: But the Original, without a forced Construction, will admit another Sense, more agreeable to the Situation of Cain at that Time, and more consistent with the Context: *And the Lord GAVE OR APPOINTED unto Cain a Sign.* In the preceding Verse he had expressed a Fear, lest any one, fired with a just Resentment against him for his cruel and unnatural Treatment towards an innocent Brother, should retaliate the Injury. To remove this just Fear and Apprehension, God promises him Safety and Security, and by a certain, visible and external Sign given to him, ratifies and confirms the Promise. After this Sign given, we read of no more Complaints, no more Expressions of Fear on Account of his Person, but assured of the divine Protection, he retired from the divine Presence. The branding him with a Mark could have been no Security to his Person; it would not have lessened

lessened but increased his Fears; for by it he would have been rather exposed to, than concealed from his Enemies.

And Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord and dwelt in the Land of Nod, on the East of Eden *. The Situation of the Land of Nod is unknown. The Hebrew נֹד might be much better and more properly translated, *a Fugitive*, which represents the Condition of Cain at that Time. God had pronounced this Curse upon him; *A Fugitive and Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth*: The sacred Historian, therefore, very pertinently adds, after that the Divine Conference was ended, that he suffered the Curse; *He dwelt in the Earth a Fugitive*. Removed from that Spot of Ground, which had before liberally yielded to him its Fruits, he wandered to and fro, not having any fixed Place of Residence, forsaken by Friends, shunned by Relations, and excluded the Privilege of appearing before the Divine Glory. There are two Words in this Chapter denoting the Earth אֶרֶץ and אֲדָמָה. The former having the ה Emphaticum prefixed, may signify the particular Spot of Ground, where our first Parents lived after their Expulsion out of Paradise,

* Gen. iv. 16.

which they cultivated; the Word originally meaning, *a tilled Ground*: The latter ארץ may be taken in a general Sense, and denote *the whole Earth*. These Words, *on the East of Eden*, must have Relation to and be connected with the former Part of this Verse, because it was the Place where the Divine Majesty appeared, and the Angels kept Guard. This Verse then, with Submission, should be thus translated: *And Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord, (which was, or used to appear) on the East of Eden, and dwelt in the Earth a Fugitive.*

These are the Generations of Jacob *. The Reader must be surprised at this Expression, when the Family of Jacob is not, as it might be expected, mentioned in the preceding Verses. It should be placed to Verse the 26th of Chapter xxxv. if it is not a marginal Explanation, and inserted into the Text by the Inaccuracy of a Transcriber. It is certain that it has no Connection with the Context, and is improperly introduced in this Place.

And Moses said thou hast spoken well, I will see thy Face again no more †. How is this Expression consistent with the Conduct of Moses in the subsequent Chapter; *And he went*

* Gen. xxxvii. 2. † Exodus x. 29.

out from Pharaoh in a great Anger *. The last Plague to be inflicted, was the Slaughter of the first Born, of which Moses was sent to acquaint Pharaoh †; whose Obstinacy in disbelieving the Report occasioned the Anger of Moses ‡. The Threatning denounced against the first Born of Ægypt and Pharaoh occasioned, it is probable, the severe Threatning from Pharaoh ||, or his Pride might have been the Cause, which was much affected by the Words of Moses, that he should have no more Occasion to intreat for the Departure of the Israelites, because his own Servant § (by his Order as it seems ¶) would not only intreat, but be urgent upon them to depart. It may appear strange, that Pharaoh, after so many Plagues inflicted, should doubt of the Execution of this: But Pride made him forget himself, thinking it not possible that he should turn Sollicitor; or, as from his former Behaviour he seems to have been of that Sort of Men, who credit nothing but what they see, he might have entertained a Distrust of the Divine Power to effect it. What might have confirmed him in this Opinion was, that no Plague had been di-

* Exodus xi. 8. † xi. 4, 5. ‡ xi. 8. || x. 28.
§ xi. 8. ¶ xii. 31, 33.

372 *Mistranslations and false Positions*

rectly and immediately inflicted upon the Persons of his Subjects. The 10th and 11th Chapters I humbly conceive should make but one; and the Verses (being more agreeable with the Context, and the different Times in which the several Things related occurred) should be placed in the following Manner: That the Reader may see the Propriety or Impropriety of the present, I shall oppose it to the old Reading in two distinct Columns.

C. x. V. 27. But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's Heart, and he would not let them go.

Old Reading.

28. And Pharaoh said unto him, get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my Face no more: for in that Day thou seest my Face, thou shalt die. C. x. 28.

29. And Moses said, thou hast spoken well, I will see thy Face again no more.

30. And

New Reading.

28. And the Lord said unto Moses, yet will I bring one Plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Ægypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether. C. xi. 1.

29. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my Wonders may be multiplied

Old Reading.

New Reading.

30. And the Lord said unto Moses, yet will I bring one Plague more upon Pharaoh, and upon Ægypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.

31. Speak now in the Ears of the People, and let every Man borrow of his Neighbour, and every Woman of her Neighbour, Jewels of Silver, and Jewels of Gold.

32. And the Lord gave the People Favour in the Sight of the Ægyptians. *Moreover the Man Moses was very great in the Land of Ægypt, in the Sight of Pharaoh's Servants, and in the Sight of the People.*

33. And

multiplied in the Land of Ægypt. C. xi. 9.

30. Speak now in the Ears of the People, and let every Man borrow of his Neighbour, and every Woman of her Neighbour, Jewels of Silver and Jewels of Gold. C. xi. 2.

31. And the Lord gave the People Favour in the Sight of the Ægyptians*. C. xi. 3. in part.

32. And Moses said, (*unto Pharaoh*) thus saith the Lord, about Midnight will I go into the midst of Ægypt. C. xi. 4

33. And

* The latter Part of this Verse seems to be a marginal Reading, and from thence crept into the Text. The Reason for suspecting its Authority is, that it does not suit with the Meekness and Modesty of Moses to say those Things of himself, which are there said of him.

374 *Mistranslations and false Positions*

Old Reading.

33. And Moses said,
Thus saith the Lord,
about Midnight will I
go out into the Midst of
Ægypt.

34 And all the first
Born in the Land of
Ægypt shall die, from
the first Born of Pha-
raoh, that sitteth upon
his Throne, even unto
the first Born of the
Maid Servant, that is
behind the Mill; and
all the first Born of
Beasts.

35. And there shall
be a great Cry through-
out all the Land of Æ-
gypt, such as there was
none like it, nor shall
be like it any more.

36. But against any of
the Children of Israel,
shall not a Dog move
his Tongue, against
Man

New Reading.

33. And all the first
Born in the Land of
Ægypt shall die, from
the first Born of Pha-
raoh, that sitteth upon
his Throne, even unto
the first Born of the
Maid Servant, that is
behind the Mill; and
all the first Born of
Beasts. C. xi. 6.

34. And there shall
be a great Cry through-
out all the Land of Æ-
gypt, such as there was
none like it, nor shall
be like it any more.
C. xi. 6.

35. But against any
of the Children of Is-
rael, shall not a Dog
move his Tongue, a-
gainst Man or Beast:
that ye may know, how
that the Lord doth put
a Difference between
the Ægyptians and Is-
rael. C. xi. 7.

36. And all these thy
Servants shall come
down unto me, and bow
down themselves unto
me,

Old Reading.

Man or Beast: that ye may know, how that the Lord doth put a Difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

37. And all these thy Servants shall come down unto me, and bow down themselves unto me, saying, Get thee out, and all the People that follow thee; and after that I will go out. *And he went out from Pharaoh in a great Anger.*

38. And the Lord said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you: that my Wonders may be multiplied in the Land of Egypt.

New Reading.

me, saying, Get thee out, and all the People that follow thee; and after that I will go out. C. xi. V. 8. in part.

37. And Pharaoh said unto him, Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my Face no more: for in that Day thou seeft my Face, thou shalt die. C. x. 28.

38. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more. (C. x. 29.) And he went out from Pharaoh in a great Anger.

This Disposition of the Verses reflects Light upon what would otherwise be obscure and inconsistent with the Context: For if these two Chapters are considered as distinct, and read as they stand both in the Original and Translation, it is evident, from C. xi. 8. that Moses was in the Presence of Pharaoh, after he had forbidden him any more to appear before him C. x. 28. and

376 *Mistranslations and false Positions*

after he (Moses) had assured him that he would see his Face again no more. C. x. v. 29.

And the Children of Israel also wept again.*

In the Translation the Hebrew יָשָׁבוּ is omitted, and inserted in the Margin: But there the just and proper Sense of it is not preserved. Its Radix should be יָשַׁב not יָשׁוּב as agreeing better with the Context, and more strongly descriptive of the obstinate and perverse, the restless and uneasy Temper of the Jews. In the subsequent Verse we find them longing after, what they deemed, the good Things of Ægypt; of so mean and abject a Spirit, that they would have been content to have continued in a State of Slavery, provided that they could have fed upon Garlick, Onions, &c. rather than enjoy their Liberty, live under the Protection of a peculiar Providence, and for a small Space of Time feed upon wholesome, if common Food. The rendering the Original, *they sat down*, strongly expresses the Heinousness of the Sin committed. They wanted Flesh, and unless it was given they resolved not to march forward, but to sit down or

* Numbers xi. 4.

remain in the Place where they were encamped. The Passage then should be thus rendered, *and the Children of Israel also SAT DOWN and wept.*

And Moab was distressed *. Thus our Translation: But more agreeable to the Conduct and Behaviour of their Prince, *was roused*, which the Original וָפַח signifies, that is, sought how to avoid the Danger, which the Appearance of the Israelites had made him apprehensive of. This he does by sending for and immediately holding a Consultation with the Princes of Midian his Allies or Tributaries. The Resolution of which was to send to Balaam, that from him who was acknowledged to be a Prophet, they might learn what would be the Consequence of opposing the Israelites.

In such and such a Place shall be my Camp §. The Septuagint and our Translation have taken no Notice of the Hebrew פלני אלמני which may denote, *an ambuscade*; which from the Advice of the Prophet to the King of Israel †, and the Question of Ben-hadad to the Officers of his Army ||, seems to be intimated. The Word פלני being de-

* Numbers xxii. 3.

§. 2 Kings, ch. vi. 8.

† 9.

|| 11.

378 *Mistranslations and false Positions*

rived from פלה *segregari, seperari*, may signify certain Detachments from the Syrian Army, and אלפני being derived from אלם *obmutuit, mutus redditus fuit*, may serve to express the secret Manner, in which the Syrian Troops should meet at the Place of Rendezvous, where the Camp was to be pitched, and when met, how they were to be encamped; which we find to be true*: The Situation of the Syrian Army being unknown to the King of Israel, before the Prophet acquainted him with it. The Passage might be thus rendered. *In such a Place shall my Forces or Troops encamp secretly.*

Then Abraham fell upon his Face, and laughed, and said in his Heart, shall a Child be born unto him that is an hundred Years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety Years old bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!† Abraham is highly and justly celebrated for his extraordinary Faith. The leaving his Native Country for an unknown and uncertain Possession, is an illustrious Proof of it, and his Confidence in the Promise of a Son, when we consider the Time of Life is as singular. Notwithstanding the Character of Abraham through

* 2 Kings 9.

† Gen. xvii. 17, 18.

the whole Life seems to be consistent, betraying nothing of Fickleness and Inconstancy, of Doubt and Despondency, yet these Verses seem to intimate a Distrust of the Divine Promise. The Chaldee and Arabic translate the Original, *he laughed for Joy*, knowing what Comfort and Consolation it would be to Sarah, who on Account of her Barrenness had been exposed to the Insolence and Derision of a Slave. *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* Does not imply a Doubt of Abraham's concerning the Promise, as if he had desired that Ishmael might be the Person to inherit the Blessing, promised to him and his Seed, because he judged it to be impossible to have another Son: For it is a Prayer offered up to God, that he would bless Ishmael; it is a Recommendation of him to the Care of his Providence. This appears from Verse 20th, and the Original will bear this Sense, *I wish or pray that Ishmael may live before thee*: that is, that thou wilt take him under thy special Care and Protection, as well as the Son whom thou hast now promised, bless Ishmael as well as Isaac. God's Answer seems to intimate this to have been the Request*;

* Gen. xvii. 20.

and the Success of Ishmael's Posterity shewed it.

*And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she (Hagar) fled from her Face**. The Hebrew ענה signifies *humbled*, as well as *afflicted*. There is no Reason for believing that Sarai imposed more upon her than she could or ought to bear, or that such Treatment was the Cause of her absconding. Her Pride had induced her to think that she was upon a Level with her Mistress, in all probability behaved as if she was, and also treated her with Scorn and Derision, as appears from the sacred Historian, v. 4. and from Sarai's Complaint to Abraham§: She might have flattered herself with the Hopes of Abraham's approving, at least not resenting her Conduct, but the Joy of having a Son did not get the better of the Patriarch's Affection to his Wife. After this Disappointment she could not brook a Return to a servile State, in which any just Commands might by her be thought hard and cruel. This appears from what the Angel says to her after her Departure, *Return to thy Mistress, and submit thyself under her Hands* ||.

* Gen. xvi. 6.

§ 5.

|| 9.

Which

Which plainly intimates, that she had not behaved with that Respect and Deference she ought to have done. I think therefore That Sarai is clear from the odious Character of a cruel and revengeful Mistress; as the original Word will very easily bear an Interpretation different from our Translation.

Exodus xxiv. 1, 2. These two Verses are improperly placed. We read (Chap. xx. 21.) that after the Delivery of the Commandments, Moses alone goes up into the Mount, when several Civil and Religious Precepts were given. This Account beginning at Chapter xx. 22. is supposed to end at Chapter xxiii. 33. But the following Verses of Chapter xxiv. viz. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. should be added: Wherein the Descent of Moses from the Mount, his communicating to the People the Laws he had received from God, the entering them into Records, the making a general Sacrifice, and the People's unanimous and voluntary Assent to pay Obedience to them; signified by joining in and assisting at the Sacrifice, are described. It is evident from Chapter xix. 24. that only Moses and Aaron were in the Mount, and from Chapter xx. 21. that the
divine

382 *Mistranslations and false Positions, &c.*

divine Precepts were communicated to Moses alone. So that the Verses should be placed as above, and the 1st and 2d of the 24th Chapter follow the 8th, which have a plain and just Connection with the subsequent, but not preceding Verses, they relating to two distinct Communications of the Divine Will at different Times.

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